



# NEWSLETTER

## Yorkshire Philosophical Society

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### Message from the Incoming Chair

First my thanks to Stephen Lusty for a supportive and illuminating handover of the role of Chair of YPS Council. Members and Council are indebted to Stephen not only for safely guiding YPS through the last five years, but for all the challenging initiatives and projects that he has both led and encouraged during this time. We are delighted that Stephen has agreed to be a Vice President. Secondly we are commissioning a framed Chairman's Roll of Honour to present to Stephen; this involves us in further research, led by Bob Hale, our Hon. Archivist, into officer roles since 1822. No doubt we will discover some fascinating facts about the history of the Society, and learn more about distinguished YPS members. In the meantime we have presented Stephen with a photographic record of the Gardens Map project official launch last September. Stephen led the Fund-raising and Celebrations Team for the project and the funding raised is a tribute to the generosity of YPS members and to Stephen's networking skills with local partner organisations.

Seven years ago, taking up early retirement I decided to return to York, my birthplace, where I hadn't lived since I was a teenager. My first job, before going to College, was as a library assistant for the new University of York, based at The Minster Library. Since that time I have worked as both a librarian and later as a teacher, but also running a music charity, living in London and later Sussex.

My first retirement didn't last long as I soon had a full time career with NYBEP linking STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) professionals with young people. This led to me volunteering with Café Scientifique and joining YPS Council. My experience of working with young people is something I would like to continue through my involvement with YPS. I know in the past the Christmas Lectures were well received but as this is now such a busy family time we are looking at offering something similar at other times of the year, such as British Science Week organised with the British Science Association. It would also be good to look again at outreach for the Society with other partner organisations, after all we are The Yorkshire, rather than York, Philosophical Society. This needs to be carefully planned so we do not duplicate the work of other groups, but it is timely to consider it now, six years before the YPS bicentenary.

It would be good to discuss both the history of the Society and new ideas with as many of you as possible, so please do come and introduce yourselves at lectures, or on study outings. At present I am finding out about all the amazing volunteers the Society has, each with a fascinating story to

tell. YPS is in safe hands with all these talented people supporting and helping to develop it.

*Catherine Brophy, Chair*



This has been an exciting period for YPS with the launch of the **Geological Mosaic Map**. Our artist Janette Ireland gave a marvellous speech at the launch describing her 'year spent with William Smith' whose original, ground-breaking work 200 years ago forms the basis for the mosaic. The Steering Group with Rod Leonard as excellent Project Manager and the tremendous support of Margaret Leonard, Vivien Irish and Alison Pringle (YMT Gardens Manager) is to be congratulated for everybody's hard work. (cont'd)

### With this Newsletter

- Lecture Programme for Jan-May 2016
- Subscription Renewal form where applicable
- The Great Yorkshire Election of 1807 - book offer
- York Historic Towns Atlas - order form

*If anything is missing, please contact Frances Chambers at the Lodge*

The Fund-raising and Celebrations work of Stephen Lusty and Felicity Hurst achieved great success in both the amount raised and the two promotional and enjoyable launch events (see below). Thanks to everyone in YPS for really working so well together towards such a successful result, and particularly on 29 September when it really was “all hands on deck.”  
*Catherine Brophy, Chair*

## Geological Map Celebrations

The pebble mosaic map representing the Yorkshire section of William Smith's 1815 map can be seen behind the ruins of St Mary's Abbey in Museum Gardens. This beautiful artwork has exceeded all our expectations, receiving widespread praise, and has already featured in several articles in the local press. The general view is that photographs do not do the mosaic justice, as they cannot convey the beautiful tonal values, subtlety of the design and flow patterns, or the multi-layered information the map contains. If you have not yet visited it we recommend you do so under both wet and dry conditions and in different lights - you will be well rewarded!



On 23 September, the Right Honourable, the Lord Mayor of York, Councillor Sonja Crisp, unveiled the Donors' Plaque, followed by a reception for major donors and Trustees of YPS and YMT. A much larger public launch was held on 29 September, when artist Janette Ireland and members of the project team were on hand to explain some of the mosaic's many details. There was also a chance to see the recently restored paper map and related displays in the Yorkshire Museum, before Andy Howard's themed lecture. The evening was rounded off with an enjoyable wine reception in recognition of the contributions made by members who gave so generously to the project. We have now obtained most of the rock specimens we plan to install in the flower borders next to the walk-

on map in early November when the borders undergo a seasonal replanting. We have also issued YPS leaflets about the map - one for adults and one for children, available from the Lodge, whilst a further children's leaflet based on a rock trail around the Gardens, and a more technical leaflet on the rocks and geology are in course of preparation. *Rod Leonard*

## John Phillips Stone Unveiled



The memorial stone commissioned by the YPS was ceremoniously unveiled on 18 October. John Phillips' remarkable geological career began 200 years ago when he began his apprenticeship to his uncle, William Smith who in the same year published the Geological Map of Britain. John Phillips went on to become Professor of Geology at

Oxford University, and Fellow of the Royal Society, as well as being appointed the first Keeper of the Yorkshire Museum. The YPS stone has been installed at the head of the grave where John and his sister Anne are buried, in York Cemetery, the original gravestone having become difficult to read.



## YPS Archives

The Yorkshire Philosophical Society was established when branches of science we now take for granted were in their infancy, and new technologies like railways and photography were yet to change the world. We are proud of the long series of historical records created by the YPS. Not many organisations can boast a complete set of minutes all the way back to December 1822 when our Society was formed, but on top of that we have an unbroken series of printed annual reports from the first AGM in January 1824. The minutes and reports, supplemented by files of correspondence, lecture programmes, press cuttings and historical notes, provide a mass of information about the decisions of Council and the activities of the members in promoting an interest in the natural sciences and antiquities over almost 200 years.

Our archives are lodged for safe-keeping at the Borthwick Institute for Archives at the University of York, and are available for anyone to see. Follow the links on the Resources pages of our website to see a list of the records we have and how to access them.

## YPS Representation in York

The YPS is represented on a number of organisations and kindred societies in York. Our representatives produce reports for YPS Council, from which the following extracts are taken (full versions will be printed in the Annual Report). If you are associated with any group/s where you feel YPS representation could be useful please talk to the Chair, via the Lodge.

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## York Museums Trust Liaison Report

October 2015

Following the £1m plus cut in Council funding for the York Museums Trust, and the unsurprising outcry at YMT's subsequently announced entry charges for the Art Gallery, the CoYC has now agreed to the charging proposals and has offered to finance £20,000 worth (some 4000 entries) of concessionary passes for special qualifying groups.

The new YMT Chief Executive, Reyahn King takes up her post on 3 November 2015, as YMT faces up to budget cuts and embarks on a cost-cutting programme. Reyahn King was invited to a meeting in October with members of YPS Council - all participants talking about their projects and interfaces with YMT. Ms King was aware of some of the interface problem areas, and, without being able to commit to solutions at this stage, left the meeting with a positive impression of the work undertaken by the YPS. *Stephen Lusty*

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## Conservation Area Advisory Panel

2014-15 Report

The Panel exists to advise and support City of York Council Planning Officers, and ultimately the Planning Committee, on matters affecting the Conservation Areas in the Greater York area. Panel members bring experience of planning, architecture and conservation of the built heritage, representing a variety of organisations and stakeholder groups. My own experience covers aspects of archaeology and conservation. Meetings are held monthly, and business over the past year has been very diverse. The redevelopment of the Terry's Factory site has recurred regularly as schemes for specific areas of the site move through the planning process. The Panel has been much concerned with the tendency to overdevelop, as well as with the length of time many of the principal surviving factory buildings have stood empty, with inevitable damage caused by the elements and vandalism. Other discussions concerned the new Hiscox building in Peasholme Green, developments at York Art Gallery and the Theatre Royal, and the conversion of St Leonard's Place from office use back to residential. Public realm schemes included changes to the layout of Exhibition Square, restoration of the Lutyens War Memorial on Station Rise, the revamping of Newgate Market, and proposals for alternative uses for the Guildhall complex. Two issues of great concern

in the past year are further budget cuts to the conservation and planning departments, and delays to the Local Plan. Without this there is no overall guidance to advise the control of the various types of development, including the vexed issue of new housing allocation in the Green Belt. *Jim Spriggs*

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## Oliver Sheldon Memorial Trust

2014-15 Report

The Trust meets formally twice a year but a very active sub-committee meets more regularly to organise the annual lectures on 'forgotten' York notaries. These talks are the main focus of the Trust and take place in the Merchant Adventurers Hall, also often repeated as part of the YPS programme.

In October 2014 the Trust approved a request for a grant of £1000 towards the cost of the YPS Geological Map Project, a very generous contribution considering the annual income of the Trust is small and this is twice the normal maximum grant - a gratifying vote of confidence in the Map project.

The Trust is developing a new website, [sheldonmemorialtrust.org](http://sheldonmemorialtrust.org). Of particular interest is the schools project launched recently in conjunction with the York Archaeological Trust. *Ken Hutson*

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## YAT General Advisory Council

2014-15 Report

York Archaeological Trust, originally founded on the initiative of the YPS, has been a prominent part of York's cultural life for over 40 years and has an enviable record of combining field work, research and publication, education and outreach with running attractions and public events. It maintains close relations with the City and York organisations including the University of York, YMT, the Council for British Archaeology and English Heritage, all represented on its governing council, of which The GAC is a smaller sub-set which meets quarterly.

The past year has been financially challenging for YAT mainly due to a lack of commercial fieldwork and grant-aided research projects, following the cessation of major funding relating to the Hungate project. To partially address this the Trust replaced three warehouse units with one large complex, now providing ample storage space for the archaeological collections and archives, as well as an improved base for the archaeological wood conservation labs. Regrettably there were also a number of voluntary redundancies, some in key skills areas.

Further afield YAT operates three satellite archaeological units in Glasgow, Sheffield and Nottingham, which continued to hold their own financially over the past year whilst completing some excellent projects to a high professional standard. In York, despite the poor market for archaeological work, YAT has been active on over 30 interventions during

the year, most notably at the Theatre Royal, where the foundations of the medieval St Leonard's Hospital were explored, and at the Monk's Cross Rugby Ground where the bank and ditch of a Roman marching camp were uncovered. Of academic importance was the publication of "Anglo-Scandinavian Occupation at 16-22 Coppergate", a welcome final addition to the twenty plus publications relating to the Coppergate Excavations of 1976-1982. Other commercial activities such as conservation services, community archaeology and the annual training dig operated successfully, alongside activities aimed at promoting professional standards and advocating the importance of heritage.

Business has been buoyant on the other side of the organisation, the attractions division, with increased visitor numbers. The Jorvik Group now runs two historic bars at Monkbar and Micklegate telling the stories of Richard III and Henry VII respectively, alongside Jorvik, Dig and Barley Hall, whilst the annual Viking and Medieval Festivals continue to raise revenue and attract visitors to York. *Jim Spriggs*

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## News of Awards

On 8 December, at the start of our lecture "Heritage at Risk: Risky Heritage? Perspectives on York's historic city landscape" by Gill Chitty, we shall have the pleasure of presenting YPS's two annual prizes for University of York students - the Charles Wellbeloved Award for the best undergraduate dissertation, and the Herman Ramm Prize for the best postgraduate dissertation. Everyone welcome.

We are also pleased to announce that Dr Andrew Jones, a member of YPS Council, has been nominated for an award from Il Premio Mediterraneo Amici delle Acque. The award is organized by Arci Pesca Fisa (the Italian Federation of Sports and Environment). Andrew has been working hard on the Society's behalf over the past few years to establish relations and build support for the Anton Dohrn Stazione Zoologica in Naples.

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## Subscription Renewals

The festive season approaches which means it's the time of year to think about subscription renewals. This year's rates remain unchanged as follows.

Single membership: £26

Joint membership: £42

Single concession: £19

Joint concession: £32

Institutions: £40

### Notes

- Membership subscriptions fall due on 1 January, and you should find a renewal form enclosed with your newsletter.
- If there is no renewal form in your envelope, this means that you have already paid up to the end of

2016, or you have a Standing Order in place to pay for your subscription. In both cases you need do nothing, and your membership card will come to you automatically with the next Newsletter.

- We would be very grateful if you could pay your subscription promptly so that your membership cards can be sent with our first newsletter of 2016 in late January or early February. Your current card remains valid until then, so don't worry that you don't have a new one at the start of the year.
- If you wish to change to paying by Standing Order, it would be very helpful if your form could be returned to the Lodge before 18 December in order to allow time for banks to set up the Order before the payment date.
- It is still possible to pay your subscription via our website using Paypal. You don't need a Paypal account - just a credit or debit card will do. Simply go to the "Donate to YPS" page (click on the "Payments" link at top right of the Homepage) and follow the instructions. Please state "Subscription" and your membership category in the "Purpose" box.
- Please don't hesitate to contact Frances Chambers at The Lodge if you have any questions about your membership or subscription payments.

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## Spring Lecture Programme

Our lecture programme for January to May 2016 is enclosed with this newsletter and we hope it has something of interest for everyone. As well as subjects from the fields of physics, chemistry, history and archaeology, we have a series of three lectures on the theme of educational research. In April we even take a look at ourselves with a talk on northern Lit and Phil societies. We look forward to seeing you during our spring programme, and in the meantime we hope you are enjoying our offerings this autumn.

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## Book Offers

As you will see from the enclosed flyers, we've been given the opportunity to order two books at special rates.

We were very pleased to be able to provide a modest financial contribution towards the publication of **The Great Yorkshire Election of 1807**, Ellen Gibson Wilson (author), Edward Royle and James Walvin (editors) - which tells the story of the biggest election in Britain before the democratic era, a fiercely contested battle between William Wilberforce, Henry Lascelles and Viscount Milton.

Our contribution to the **York Volume** of the **British Historic Towns Atlas** has been purely in the form of moral support, interest and eager anticipation. The Atlas brings together topographical, archaeological, historical and cartographic evidence to present a picture of what is known of the city through time. The project was initiated as long ago as 1972, when YPS

was very much part of the setting up of York Archaeological Trust, and we are delighted that our former President, Peter Addyman, has guided it to a successful conclusion.

## Members' Pages on the Web

A number of items on the YPS website are only visible to members, not the general public, and to see these pages members need first to log-on using their YPS password. These items include extracts from Annual Reports, special articles, YPS Newsletters online, reports and photos on visits and holidays, and options for receiving personalised email announcements.

If you don't yet have a password, or have forgotten yours, please contact Frances Chambers at the Lodge.

### New Pages on the Website

- YPS Archive - See a list of records dating back to the earliest days of the Society:  
[ypsyork.org/resources/yps-archive/](http://ypsyork.org/resources/yps-archive/)
- Read David Rowe's article on John Edward Stead, FRS (1851-1923) - chemist and metallurgist:  
[ypsyork.org/resources/yorkshire-scientists-and-innovators/stead/](http://ypsyork.org/resources/yorkshire-scientists-and-innovators/stead/)



Catherine Brophy, Chair of YPS, and John Lawton FRS

### YPS President's Dinner, 21 October 2015

Members were treated to an entertaining after-dinner talk by guest speaker Sir John Lawton (Chair of YMT) who recounted his early experiences, trials and tribulations, as he forged his career in entomology and ornithology. Thanks to Sharon Lusty for successfully organising the evening.

### STOP PRESS:

Date for your diary for a Tour of Dorset, 5 days/4 nights, starting on Monday 16 May 2016  
Alan Owen

## Can You Help?

### Wine Servers - volunteers needed

Following our lectures the audience is invited to the Lodge for informal discussion and a drink. Volunteers are needed to undertake one or two lectures a season, to set out and serve drinks and nibbles and clear up afterwards. This is also a great way to get to get involved and meet other members, so if you would like to help please contact Margaret Leonard 01904-658841 [mleonardyork@gmail.com](mailto:mleonardyork@gmail.com), or Frances Chambers 01904-656713, [info@ypsyork.org](mailto:info@ypsyork.org)

### Car-sharing for lectures

Now that the evenings are dark, many of our members are nervous about venturing out alone to attend lectures on foot or by public transport. If you come to lectures this way and would like to have company for the journey, or if you travel in by car and would be willing to give a lift, please let Frances Chambers know how and from where you travel and she will see whether it is possible to put members in touch with one another. Initially we would be particularly interested to hear from anyone travelling from or through Fulford Road or Fishergate.

### Newsletter Delivery

Volunteers are needed to deliver newsletters in Strensall and the YO26 area of Acomb. If you could spare a few minutes four times a year, please contact Frances Chambers at The Lodge.

**WANTED!!** - photographs to illustrate the next Annual report. Have you been on a YPS visit this year, and did you take photos? If so please contact Carol Smith via the Lodge 01904-656713 [info@ypsyork.org](mailto:info@ypsyork.org)

### Email addresses

It is extremely helpful for the society if we have as many members' email addresses as possible, not only to let you know about events and so forth but so that, if necessary, we can contact you at short notice (eg about late changes to lectures and events). Obviously we hope never to have to cancel a lecture or other event but it is just possible that factors outside our control intervene. We would want to inconvenience as few members as possible so are asking members to send an email to Frances Chambers at [info@ypsyork.org](mailto:info@ypsyork.org) to be added to our members' email list (which is always Bcc'd to members, not Cc'd).

**Change to Autumn Lecture Programme****Tuesday 24 November**

Because of circumstances beyond our control it has been necessary to make a change to our Lecture Programme. In place of the talk on Food Security by Professor Sue Hartley, Dr Katie Slocombe from the University of York will speak on: "Evolution of Language: what do chimpanzees have to say?" We are grateful to Dr Slocombe for kindly stepping in to fill an unexpected gap and look forward to her talk.

**Christmas Post-Lecture Mince-pie Reception****Tuesday 15 December**

It is now a YPS tradition to start our Christmas celebrations early with wine and mince pies in the Yorkshire Museum Atrium, this year following David Winpenny's lecture "A Very Dangerous Work: Sir Gilbert Scott and the restoration of Ripon Cathedral". Everyone is welcome and there will be a small charge of £3 collected on the night.

\*\*\*A feature of this event is the variety of home-made mince pies offered by members. If you have time to bake a dozen or so of your own please contact Margaret Leonard 01904-658841, mleonard@york.ac.uk\*\*\*

**Visit by Members of Newcastle Lit and Phil****Tuesday 19 April 2016**

A group of Newcastle Lit & Phil members are visiting York, following our visit to them last year when we were handsomely hosted and taken on tours of the city - this is our chance to reciprocate.

Details of the day have yet to be finalised, but the visit will start c11am, and end with a YPS lecture "Transpennine Enlightenment: the Lit Phils in the North, 1780-1830", by Jon Mee, starting at the earlier time than usual, 6pm.

If anyone would like to help with the event please leave a message for John Bibby/Catherine Brophy via the Lodge.

**1816: the year Without a Summer**

**21 May 2016, Whitby Museum** - Joint meeting of The Royal Meteorological Society and the History of Meteorology and Physical Oceanography Groups. The day-long meeting will examine the climatological causes and consequences of that remarkable season, including a session on Whitby's most famous son and scientist William Scoresby Jr., and extend more widely to embrace expressions in art - Turner's famous sunset paintings, and in literature, where the dramatic weather inspired a sub-theme in the Gothic tradition. Further information on the RMS website:

[rmets.org/events/1816-year-without-summer-1](http://rmets.org/events/1816-year-without-summer-1)

**Office Closure**

The Lodge will close for Christmas/New Year at midday on Wednesday 23 December, re-opening on Monday 4 January

**WHAT'S ON****Wednesday 4 November**

**Café Sci** "What's all the Buzz about Bees?"  
Hugh MacPherson

**Tuesday 10 November**

**YPS Lecture** "Dynamic energetic coast: the East Riding, its people and the sea"  
Robb Robinson

**Thursday 12 November**

A Voyage of Discovery: Leeds Museum reserve collections - contact the Lodge to see if places are available

**Tuesday 24 November**

**YPS Lecture** "Evolution of Language: what do chimpanzees have to say?"  
Katie Slocombe

**Wednesday 2 December**

**Café Sci** "Natural Alternatives to Antibiotics: Sound Science or Muddled Myth?"  
Colin Inglis

**Tuesday 8 December**

**YPS Lecture** "Heritage at Risk: Risky Heritage? Perspectives on York's historic city landscape" Gill Chitty  
preceded by Herman Ramm & Charles Wellbeloved Awards

**Tuesday 15 December**

**YPS Lecture** "A Very Dangerous Work: Sir Gilbert Scott and the restoration of Ripon Cathedral" David Winpenny  
followed by Christmas Mince-Pie Reception

**Wednesday 6 January**

**Café Sci** "Explosive Eating Plants"  
Liz Rylott

**Café Scientifique**

All are welcome to join us on the first Wednesday of each month at City Screen Basement. Presentations begin at 7.30pm and doors and a pay bar open at 7pm. Tickets are free from City Screen, or on the door on the evening, but places are limited to 70

**YPS Lectures**

Lectures are held in the Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens, starting at 7.30pm. Following the talks, members and friends are invited to The Lodge for drinks