Notes from the Chair

The lecture programme’s ‘Engineering’ mini-series concluded with two excellent lectures. On 28 February Prof Jon Timmis, Head of the Department of Electronic Engineering at York University, accompanied by Nao, the humanoid robot, gave us an insight into potential practical applications of robotic engineering, being developed in collaboration with biologists. In March, in partnership with the Institution of Engineering and Technology, North Yorkshire Branch, Prof Andy Heyes outlined the issues of providing sustainable, affordable and secure energy supplies for everyone. He provided us with a thoughtful analysis of how to embrace essential changes in energy supply or be left behind. We were also fortunate to have an inspiring lecture unveiling some of the mysteries of Quantum Mechanics (14 March) from Dr Jiannis Pachos who, despite technical problems in the hall, gave an elegant overview of the counter intuitive science of Quantum Physics. Summaries of lectures are regularly added to the website by a team of YPS volunteers (search the What’s On pages).

This year’s John and Anne Phillips Lecture, held at Hull University on 16 March, was given by Professor Sanjeev Gupta from Imperial College, London. His presentation “Geological Mapping on Mars” gave us a unique insight into ‘extra-terrestrial’ geological mapping and was illustrated with images direct from NASA. Our group of YPS members was also privileged to enjoy a reception where we had a preview of the mapping work of third year students, one of whom will receive the 2017 YPS John and Anne Phillips Prize later in the year.

For our summer programme we have fitted in two extra lectures. As our contribution to the York Festival of Ideas (University of York) on 13 June we welcome Dr Claire Horwell from Durham University, speaking on “Volcanoes and their health hazards”. On Friday 7 July we are joining up with the British Society for the History of Science (coming to York for their International Conference). Our speaker Helen Pearson, science writer and Editor of Nature, will talk about “The Life Project”.

Congratulations must go to the Editorial team, led by Carole Smith, for the excellent Annual Report for 2016, which you will receive with this newsletter. Also enclosed is notice of the AGM on 6 June with a nomination form for new Members of Council. Following the AGM there will be a talk by Dr Peter Hogarth “A Noble Spot of Ground: a history of the Museum Gardens” and the evening will be completed with our summer wine reception. Catherine Brophy
Marygate entrance update

Please note that on Tuesday 13 June and Friday 7 July the Marygate entrance will close at 8pm (normal garden closing time) and only the Museum Street exit will be available. Otherwise this entrance/exit will be open as usual for members to attend Tuesday evening lectures. Members using the Marygate entrance are asked only for a donation of £1 (in the piggy-bank on the reception desk at lectures) which will go towards the cost of staffing the gate.

YPS Activities Group Report

Members of the Activities Group have been working hard to bring you a programme of varied and interesting activities in 2017. Some have already taken place, including a visit to Hull organised by the Geology Group to attend the John and Anne Phillips Lecture (a fascinating account of Mars exploration), and a test run of the York Science Trails. By the time you get this newsletter, we will also have held our study tour to Portsmouth. This will be our first tour arranged with ‘Just for Groups’; a further trip is planned with them, to the Oxford area in October. The move to using a travel agent for our multi-day tours has prompted us to rewrite the terms and conditions for all our trips and these can be consulted at the Lodge and on the website on the social group pages, under the ‘Groups’ tab. We hope you find them ‘user friendly’.

The other activities in our program for the next few months are really varied. On 5 May Catherine Brophy is taking a group by coach to Richmond to visit the Georgian Theatre and Middleham Castle, and to hear a talk about horse racing, while on 24 May a group of computer buffs will visit Jim Austin’s Computer Shed (both of these events are now fully booked). On 6 June, at the end of the lecture which follows the AGM, we will have our usual Summer Reception, while on 8 June those interested in Geology, or just the Yorkshire landscape, can visit Stump Cross Cavern and the remarkable Coldstones Cut sculpture where there will be a talk about the geology revealed in the quarry which it overlooks (a few places are still available). July sees a trip to Manchester to visit the Museum of Science and Industry, with a voyage on the Bridgewater canal. This is now fully booked.

Our autumn programme will begin with a trip to Helmsley (see flier enclosed) and the Oxford trip mentioned above, with other highlights being the President’s Evening, the Nuffield Reception (where local teenagers display posters explaining their summer research projects), and our Christmas mince pie reception!

Further details of YPS activities can be found on our website: www.ypsyork.org/, under ‘What’s On’.

Monthly Get-togethers at the ‘Star Inn the City’

Get-togethers were held on Monday 20 February and Wednesday 27 March. Both meetings were most enjoyable and the ‘Star Inn the City’, on the riverside edge of Museum Gardens, has proved to be a very relaxed and informal venue where members can meet and get to know fellow-members whilst discussing their various interests within YPS. Having held these social events over the past 6 months on different afternoons, Wednesday appears to be the most popular day to attend. The next two meetings will be on 24 May and 14 June at 2.30pm at the ‘Star Inn the City’. All members are welcome and there is no need to book, just turn up! We then have a break over the July and August holiday period.

Summer Wine Reception

We are pleased to announce that, following the pattern of the last several years, we will be holding a wine reception on 6 June, following the AGM and lecture by Peter Hogarth - on the history of Museum Gardens. The reception will be held in the atrium of the Yorkshire Museum, with sparkling wine, soft drinks and nibbles. We hope this event will give everyone a pleasant opportunity to socialise with other members. There is no need to book in advance as tickets will be offered only at the lecture, at a very reasonable price.

Café Scientifique

Wednesday 3 May

“Geology on the Rails” presented by speakers from Network Rail, Jenny Cooke and Sarah Burton, and supported by the YPS Geology Group - part of Yorkshire Geology Month.

Wednesday 7 June

“The Designer of the Future” with Warren Fearn, of York St John University Design Centre, presented as part of the York Festival of Ideas. Augmented reality is becoming familiar through games such as Pokémon Go and the face-mingling lenses in Snapchat. But as well as developing new forms of entertainment, virtual reality and augmented reality are becoming useful tools for designers and scientists and in healthcare.

Warren Fearn will discuss how designers are using these new tools and offer the chance to try out some state-of-the-art technology.
Wednesday 5 July

“Electric Dreams: Home computers since 1980” presented by Dr Tom Lean.

Computers invaded British homes for the first time in the early 1980s, with a wave of cheap, futuristic microcomputers that allowed millions of people to discover for themselves the world of computing. Join Tom Lean, historian of technology and author of Electronic Dreams: How 1980s Britain learned to love the computer, for a nostalgic look at how a depressed 1980s Britain got over its fear of microchips and embraced the computer as a ‘passport to the future’.

The venue for all Café Sci meetings is The Basement Bar, City Screen, Coney St. Y01 9QL. Doors open at 7 for a 7.30pm start. Tickets are free and can be pre-booked by phone or online with City Screen (0871 9025726).

YPS Blog

Do keep up to date with reports of events, links and information online, on the YPS Blog: www.yps york.org/blog/

Museum Gardens, Spring Bulletin

Spring is in full swing and summer is just around the corner, so things are getting busy in Museum Gardens. The spring display worked well this year and has generated much positive feedback. The inclusion of more permanent bulb drifts over the last few years is paying off, with Anemone, Crocus and Narcissus well represented in the garden. Their foliage is left to die down naturally to ensure abundant blooms next year. As the season progresses, spring bulbs give way to herbaceous perennials, flowering shrubs and trees. Look out for Ornamental Onions (Allium sp.) in the Edible Wood and Butterfly Border - these plants are regularly visited by beneficial pollinating insects such as hoverflies and solitary bees. Behind the gardeners shed, Tansy Beetles are doing well having emerged from hibernation on 25 March, and two bee hotels have been installed on the shed wall near the Tansy Beetle bed. New features in the garden are the re-opened Pavilion café and a ‘pop-up’ kiosk in a converted horsebox by the Yorkshire Museum. It is hoped that these, alongside a new company running the ice-cream trailer, will provide much needed refreshments for garden visitors throughout the summer.

Notable dates coming up: Royal Gun Salutes on 21 April, 2 June, 10 June and 17 June; opening of the Viking Exhibition at the Yorkshire Museum on 19 May; Eboracum Roman Festival 1-4 June; York Proms on 9 July. Alison Pringle, YMT Gardens Manager

‘Viking: Rediscover the Legend’ - Yorkshire Museum, 19 May to 5 November 2017

A major new partnership exhibition with the British Museum, when two of the most significant and inter-nationally recognised collections of Viking Age treasure in Britain will be brought together for the first time. Featuring some of the most exciting Anglo-Saxon and Viking discoveries ever made, the exhibition will explore how the Vikings transformed life in Britain. Star objects from the British Museum will be exhibited alongside the Yorkshire Museum’s world class collections, giving a fresh perspective on how Viking settlers shaped every aspect of life in Britain.

The exhibition will open at the Yorkshire Museum and then tour to the University of Nottingham Museum, Southport’s Atkinson Museum, Aberdeen Art Gallery and Norwich Castle Museum.

A couple of things to note: The Middleham Jewel will be off display for the duration of the exhibition but will return in November. Several of the Museum’s important Viking and Anglo-Saxon artefacts, including the Coppergate Helmet, will go on tour with the exhibition for two years from November.

Planning is already underway for a major new exhibition focussing on Yorkshire’s dinosaurs in the Jurassic period. This will replace the current ‘Extinct’ galleries and will open on 24 March, 2018.

‘Chocolate: York’s Sweet Past’ - Castle Museum April 2017 to January 2018

Delve into the delicious history of some of the world’s most iconic chocolates and sweets as York Castle Museum takes you on a chocolaty tour of sweets galore.

Start your chocolate journey in the museum’s Period Rooms to discover how the Victorians, Georgians and Jacobians satisfied their sweet tooth. Then follow the steps to find a spectacular whizzing and fizzing sweet-making machine in the Toy Gallery. Follow your nose to find out what’s cooking in our working Chocolate Factory where you can explore what it was like to work in York’s famous factories. At special times of year you can also enjoy tasting sessions and expert workshops.

Details of all YMT events can be found on the website: www.yorkshiremuseum.org.uk/.

Annual Report Delivery

If you receive your newsletter by email, it would help us to save postage if you are able to collect your copy of the Annual Report either at a lecture or from the Lodge. Our volunteer post-people do their best to deliver as many newsletters as possible but cannot cover every area.
**DIARY**

**Wednesday 3 May 7.30pm - Café Scientifique**  
“Geology on the Rails” with speakers Jenny Cooke and Sarah Burton of Network Rail. Part of Geology Month.

**Friday 5 May Richmond Study Day**  
“My Kingdom for a Horse” (fully booked).

**Tuesday 9 May 7.30pm - YPS Lecture**  
“Womens's Employment in Britain over the last fifty years: changes, challenges, unexpected outcomes” Dr Judith Glover, Emeritus Professor of Employment Studies, University of Roehampton.

**Saturday 20 May 1pm**  
Visit to Jim Austin Computer Collection, Fimber (fully booked).

**Tuesday 23 May 7.30pm - YPS Lecture**  

**Wednesday 24 May 2.30pm - YPS Get-Together**  
The Star Inn the City (see below), no need to book.

**Tuesday 6 June - YPS AGM and Lecture**  
“A Noble Spot of Ground: a history of the Museum Gardens” Dr Peter Hogarth, Department of Biology, University of York. Followed by our Summer Reception, tickets available at the lecture.

**Wednesday 7 June 7.30pm - Café Scientifique**  
“The Designer of the Future” with Warren Fearn, York St John University Design Centre. Presented as part of the York Festival of Ideas.

**Tuesday 13 June 7.30pm - YPS Lecture**  
“Volcanoes and their Health Hazards” Dr Claire Horwell, Dept of Earth Sciences, University of Durham. A lecture for the York Festival of Ideas.

**Wednesday 14 June 2.30pm - YPS Get-Together**  
The Star Inn the City (see below), no need to book.

**Wednesday 5 July 7.30pm - Café Scientifique**  
“Electric Dreams: Home computers since 1980” Dr Tom Lean.

**Friday 7 July 7.30pm - YPS Lecture**  

**Thursday 13 July 2 to 4pm**  
YPs and YMT Workshop, facilitated by Reyahn King, Chief Executive, York Museums Trust.

**Monday 17 July - Day trip**  
“Bringing Science and Water to Life” Manchester Museum of Science and Industry including a boat trip on the Bridgewater Canal (fully booked).

**FURTHER AHEAD**

**Monday 11 September**  
“Gardens and Archaeology”

Friday 7 July 7.30pm - YPS Lecture  

Thursday 13 July 2 to 4pm  
YPs and YMT Workshop, facilitated by Reyahn King, Chief Executive, York Museums Trust.

Monday 17 July - Day trip  
“Bringing Science and Water to Life” Manchester Museum of Science and Industry including a boat trip on the Bridgewater Canal (fully booked).

**FURTHER AHEAD**

**Monday 11 September**  
“Gardens and Archaeology”

A day in Helmsley, by shared transport, including a guided tour of the Walled Garden, and visits to Helmsley Castle and Helmsley Archaeology Store (English Heritage). See flier enclosed.

**8-10 October “Secrets, Spies and Statesmen”**

Hughenden Manor

Catherine Brophy is leading this study tour. Based at Jurys Inn Oxford, we will explore Bletchley Park on Sunday, followed by a day at Blenheim Palace with a choice of curator talks on either Winston Churchill or Capability Brown. On the final day we will have a guided tour of Hughendon Manor (NT), Benjamin Disraeli’s home, where there was a secret map-making operation during World War Two. A flier is included with this newsletter. Please indicate if you are interested in joining the tour which is being organised with “Just for Groups”; full details and the booking form will then be sent to you.

The Lodge will be closed 7-9 June, for Frances’ holiday, re-opening on Monday 12 June.