

Founded
1822



NEWSLETTER

Yorkshire Philosophical Society

Promoting the public understanding of science since 1822

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From the Chair

Dear Members,

We do hope you are managing to cope with the strange times that we are living through in whatever ways help you to find interest and enjoyment alongside staying safe and well.

Although with the closure of the Yorkshire Museum our 2020 lecture programme has been suspended, we have managed to rearrange some of the lectures for the Autumn and for Spring 2021. A listing follows on page 10 and further details can be found on the website. The partnership lecture with IET North Yorkshire and a Sirius Minerals engineer has been **provisionally** rebooked for Tuesday 22nd September and we will confirm the date and venue later in the summer. The IET does host videos online and we are exploring whether this might be a possibility for this presentation if we are not able to meet together for the lecture.

For our last lecture before lockdown, in early March, we had the great privilege of welcoming Professor Jordi José, from the Department of Physics, UPC Barcelona to give us his presentation on “Stellar Alchemy and the origin of Cosmic Elements”. Starting with his year as a sick child reading Flash Gordon and observing a superhero escaping by recognising an image of the periodic table, he enthralled us with a brilliant journey through the stars. As Andy Marvin says in his online review “the lecture was illustrated with spectacular



Omphalodes cappadocica ‘Cherry Ingram’ - see page 8
Photo: thanks to Steve Williams

stellar images and peppered with Jordi’s infectious humour and mental arithmetic”.

We are all unsure when we will be able to meet again in person but we will resume our Get-Togethers at some point, even if in a bigger venue than “the Snug” to facilitate physical distances. We will also be reorganising the AGM for the Autumn – see the note from the Hon Secretary overleaf.

In the meantime, we are beginning to add more resources to the YPS website and welcome any contributions you would like to offer or any suggestions for guest researchers to approach for reports about their work. As part of last summer's photography project, images of Contemporary Scientists were displayed in York Explore Library with short texts about their work and we are seeking permission to reproduce these on the website and in newsletters; see the first example on page 7.

The YPS Bicentenary Planning Group has decided to produce a short account of the history of the Society to be published in 2022, alongside an enhanced lecture programme. Historian and YPS member Mrs Sarah Sheils has started scoping the contents and we are grateful to her for undertaking this work.

Frances Chambers, the Society's Clerk, is doing sterling work undertaking the YPS administration from home in the North Yorkshire countryside. Read her observations on rural life past and present in her blog entries "The Clerk in the Country" (<https://www.ypsyork.org/blog/>) Compiling this newsletter has been one of Frances' tasks and we are very grateful to all the members who have sent contributions, the range of subjects reflecting the wide variety of our interests. We were particularly pleased to receive our "Letter from Australia" on page 3 and have been heartened by more recent news that the situation there continues to improve.

Thank you also to all members who have agreed to take the newsletter digitally, saving Frances a great deal of work printing and packing. If you could manage without a paper copy, even if as a temporary measure until she is able to work in the Lodge again, please contact her on info@ypsyork.org.

To end on a cheerful note, the Yorkshire Museum has now become known across the world on twitter @yorkshiremuseum for leading a "Curator Battle" every Friday. Choosing a theme each week such as at Easter "Best Egg", curators across the world are invited to send a photograph of their best object that is an improvement on the YM's image. On this occasion, in response to the YM's 1600 year old Roman egg from York, the Hermitage entered a Fabergé egg. The later entries were picked up and reported by the Guardian:

https://amp.theguardian.com/culture/2020/apr/20/museum-hold-twitter-showdown-to-find-worlds-creepiest-object?twitter_impression=true - Guardian April 20th

On behalf of the YPS Trustees and myself I send you our good wishes,

Catherine Brophy, Chair
chair@ypsyork.org

2020 AGM update

Members will be aware of the constraints imposed because of the lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The Society is required to hold its AGM by 30 June each year but because of the lockdown and the imposition of social distancing this will not be possible this year. Unfortunately, the "Laws" of the YPS do not permit the Society to hold Council meetings or the AGM using Social media (for example, Zoom, Skype). In consequence, last month the Trustees agreed the following two proposals which members will be asked to ratify at the postponed AGM in the autumn: -

Proposal 1:

The 2020 AGM is deferred to an unspecified date in October (likely to be 20 October), or later, if circumstances require. (see explanatory note 1 below)

The 5-year term of the Society's Chair, Catherine Brophy, ends at the 2020 AGM. Currently no one has volunteered to succeed her. Catherine has indicated that she will be willing to offer her services as Chair for a period of no more than 2 years. Members of Council are very grateful for her very generous offer. However, in order for this extension to satisfy the "Laws" members' approval is required.

Proposal 2

The period of tenure (see explanatory note 3 below) of the current Chair is extended by no more than 2 years.

Explanatory notes

1. The "Laws" state AGM "shall be held" before 30 June (Law 8).
2. Holding the AGM in October would give sufficient time to submit the return to the Charity Commission, given the current requirements.
3. The "Laws" (4.1(iv)) state that the Chair may serve for a "maximum of five years".

Council hopes to be able to hold its next meeting in early September when final arrangements will be made for the AGM.

Margaret Hammersley
Hon Secretary

Our Annual Report for 2019 would, under normal circumstances, accompany this newsletter. The Report was received from the printers a couple of days before the lockdown began but owing to present restricted access to the Lodge will be sent out to members later in the summer.

Letter from Australia



G'day Friends,

With the cancellations and postponements of the latest excursions and presentations, we decided that we need a means of keeping in contact and maintaining relationships, hence this newsletter. As our only overseas member, I've been asked to describe how we are living here in Australia at the moment. Like you, we have been afflicted with a virus, but, unlike you, its effects have been limited. Likely, this may be because it arrived in our summer, but, more likely, it is because our island has a much bigger moat than yours. When it became clear that a sickness was coming out of Wuhan and Hubei Province, our government immediately caused travel to and from there to be cancelled. Not long afterwards, cruise ships were being prevented from docking. With hindsight, we see that there were three major vectors for this virus: students and their families returning from Hubei Province and Wuhan directly; tourists transitting through Hong Kong and Singapore and tourists arriving from cruise ships. At one point, just one cruise vessel "Ruby Princess", was solely responsible for just over 40% of all positive tests.

I live and work in Queensland. As an exploration geologist currently working in the coalfields, I'm told I'm an essential worker. That means I have permission to be out and about. My work roster at the moment, is two weeks in the field and one week at home and to get there and back again means a 1½ hour flight each way from my home in Ipswich to Emerald in Central Queensland. At the start of the lockdown, when so many people were told they were non-essential workers and had to stay at home, it was eerily quiet walking through the terminals. On the flights, everyone had a window seat, no-one sat in the aisle seats and the row immediately in front and in back was empty. After just 10 weeks, it seems normal to see so few people in the terminals and on the flights and it is easy to forget that there are 5 million other Queenslanders out there. Things are changing though. Much of Queensland has not reported a single positive test, Central Queensland has had only 6 positives and the region around my hometown has had 37 with the last case reported over 5 weeks ago. As far as I am aware, all have recovered. Because of this, people are now being allowed to visit neighbours and friends and, on weekends, picnic, go boating and visit some beaches, provided you don't travel more than 50km from your home or 30km from your postcode. Importantly, visits to aged care facilities and nursing homes are being allowed with precautions.

Meanwhile, I'm almost at the end of the current rotation and if you have ever doubted that Australia can be hot, dry, dusty and bedevilled by flies, don't, it's all true.

If you are safe and well, stay safe and well; if you aren't then may you have a speedy recovery and if you have experienced loss please accept my sincere condolences.

*Andrew Wheeler
YPS member
Queensland Australia*

A Day of Archaeology and Geology at Hull

Thursday 5th March 2020 - A morning touring the Archaeology Gallery at the Hull and East Riding Museum, led by Peter Halkon and an afternoon at The University of Hull for the John and Anne Phillips Geology Mapping Lecture, 'Mapping lava flows from ground, air and space', by Professor Kathy Cashman.

A group of us met on Thursday morning, at a café opposite The Museum on High Street, Hull, for tea and coffee. Dr Peter Halkon of the University of Hull joined us there and took us over to the Museum.

Following the lecture that Dr Halkon had given to YPS on 14th January on 'Later Prehistoric Landscapes on the Yorkshire Wolds', there was much anticipation of the tour and this was more than fulfilled.

We started with the history of the Hull and East Riding Museum, the destruction during WW2 of the Municipal Museum containing the original geological collection and the extension of the present site (The Old Corn Exchange) in 1989, removal of the transport section to the Streetlife Museum and the development of the Archaeological Gallery.

Dr Halkon then led us through from the Mesolithic (Star Carr), Neolithic (Willy Howe and Duggleby Howe), Bronze Age (Mortimer's pottery beakers and the Ferriby Boats), Iron Age (Wetwang and Pocklington Chariot Burials and the Hasholme Boat) to the Roman section (so rich in floor mosaics and finds). He discussed aspects of the underlying geology, from the Lower Jurassic under the western escarpment of the Wolds to the glacial till creating the eastern landscape of Holderness; this shaped the land and affected settlement and trading patterns. He described the way that climate changes had altered routes and displaced people: the return of humans to Britain after the last Ice Age, the final destruction of the Doggerland link to the continent by about 7500 years ago and the sea level rise which flooded the River Foulness at the time of the construction of the extensive Late Bronze Age linear earthwork dykes in the dry Wolds valleys.

His personal involvement in the Museum was shown by his accounts of being involved in various excavations mentioned in the displays or in finding the artefacts in the cases. His account of finding the Hasholme Boat close to his former family property, the way it had been constructed and the problems with its preservation and display led us back in time to the people making it 2300 years ago. He was also able to describe the activities of other archaeologists or heritage managers he knew working in the area, Felix Whittam, Keith Emerick and Terry Manby. Peter then left us looking around the Roman section and we eventually dispersed to find lunch.

The Hull University undergraduate prize for geological mapping is sponsored by the YPS and the lecture at Hull gives an opportunity to view and discuss undergraduate mapping projects. Liam Herringshaw introduced Professor Kathy Cashman of Bristol University for the afternoon lecture, with a large audience of students, academics and others at the Robert Blackburn Lecture Theatre.

On her University profile she writes:

My research concerns the evolution of magma within the Earth's crust and how its path to the surface triggers volcanic eruptions. I use a combination of field volcanology, igneous petrology, kinetics, microscopy and fluid dynamics to address the fundamental problem of how volcanoes work. My current focus is on mafic volcanism - from channel development in Hawaiian lava flows to volcanic ash formation in eruptions from

Hawaiian, Icelandic, Italian, Latin American and Pacific Northwest (US) volcanoes.

Professor Cashman gave that the rationale for mapping lava flows is to predict the nature and course of future - and possibly destructive - flow. Older flows in Oregon, Iceland and Saudi Arabia are studied to see the way they have intersected and to measure their length. Mapping current eruption sites brings its own problems of access, but developing and combining different methods of photogrammetry, ground-based 'Surface from Motion', drones, LIDAR and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) has allowed increasingly accurate measurements and monitoring.

Measuring viscosity and density of a very hot fluid containing bubbles of gas, and their variation with distance travelled, is necessary to determine velocity and the likely reach of flows. Mapping the changing topography, as flow is progressing, is essential to predict direction.

She has developed methods of simulating the nature of lava with golden syrup and melted basalt using Monte Carlo methods. Theoretical aspects are examined using Jeffrey's Equation connecting viscosity, velocity down a slope and density. Eddy currents, standing waves and the flow of lava through the pipes and tubes, created by the outside surface of a flow cooling and solidifying, can be modelled using the Reynold's Number.

All of this was exemplified with images and discussion of individual sites of pahoehoe and other lavas at Mauna Loa and Kilauea in Hawaii, Holuhraun in Iceland, Reventador in the Andes of Ecuador and Etna in Sicily. She also discussed the problems in predicting the vent source of an eruption, which may be a considerable distance from known calderas travelling underground along unknown fissures.

Her message to the students was that, despite the remote methods of collecting data and images and the theoretical work required, you have to be out in the field.

Afterwards, there was a reception in the Map Room of the Cohen building to see the student mapping presentations.

Thanks to Dr Peter Halkon, The Hull and East Riding Museum, The Department of Geography, Geology and Environment at the University of Hull and Liam Herringshaw.

Paul Thornley

See also:

<https://www.ypsYork.org/events/late-prehistoric-landscapes-of-the-yorkshire-wolds-recent-research/> and the recently published *The Arras Culture of Eastern Yorkshire* edited by Dr Peter Halkon.

John Phillips. Yorkshire's traveller through time.

In 1853, John Phillips – widely recognised as an eminent geologist – wrote *The Mountains, Rivers and Sea Coast of Yorkshire*: and a more modest work covering much of the same ground, *Railway Excursion from York, Leeds and Hull*. Both books convey Phillips's vast knowledge of his favourite county: both convey also his enthusiasm and delight in the Yorkshire landscape.

In *John Phillips. Yorkshire's traveller through time*, Colin Speakman approaches his subject in the same spirit. Although 'this book does not attempt to be a biography of Phillips', it does a pretty good job as such. But it is also much more than a biography, conveying Phillips' – and the author's – enthusiasm: a veritable Excursion around the Yorkshire Mountains, Rivers and Sea Coast in its own right.

John Phillips' origins were inauspicious. Born in Wiltshire in 1800, orphaned at the age of eight, he was taken under the wing of his uncle, William Smith. For five years. John was sent to boarding school: then, when Smith could no longer afford the fees, he was quartered on a friend, the Rev. Benjamin Richardson. Thereafter, Phillips became William Smith's assistant and apprentice, accompanying him on surveying trips and helping to create his meticulous maps, sorting and labelling his fossil collections: and, no doubt, helping to keep his uncle's 'irregular, contracted and fluctuating' finances under control. In 1819, Smith spent some time in a debtor's prison: after his release, uncle and nephew fled north in search of work.

There followed a few years of striding across the north of England finding work where they could and, between paid work, carrying out their own geological surveys. One result of these was the publication, in 1821, of a set of geological maps of Yorkshire.

1824 found uncle and nephew at Kirkby Lonsdale, in Westmoreland, surveying for improvements in the town's water supply. By chance, a member of the recently formed Yorkshire Philosophical Society was visiting relatives in the town, and was introduced to them. On his return to York, he reported this to the Society. In very short order, William Smith was invited

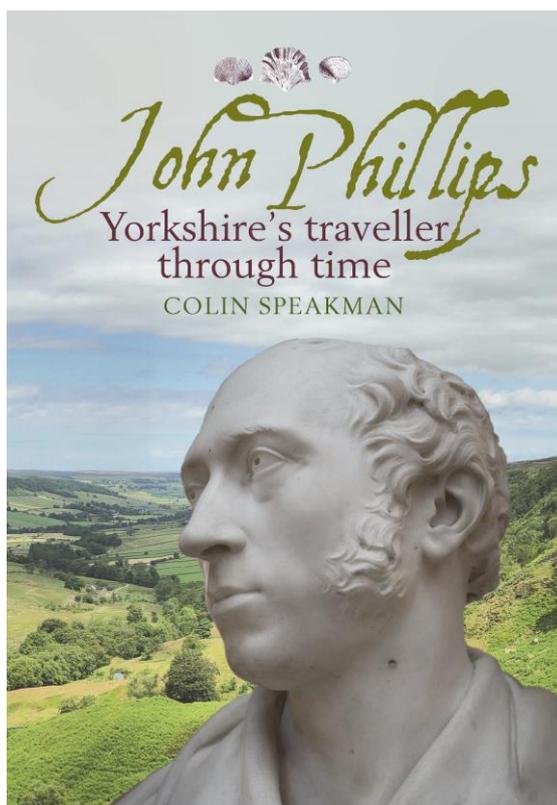
to York to deliver a course of lectures on geology, assisted by his nephew; and soon thereafter John Phillips was appointed as first Keeper of the new Yorkshire Museum.

This may sound like an avalanche of lucky accidents. It must be remembered, however, that the driving force of the nascent Philosophical Society was the Rev. William Venables Vernon (later William Vernon Harcourt), an enthusiastic geologist, in correspondence with most of the leading geologists of the day, undoubtedly aware of William Smith and his geological map: and not a man to miss an opportunity. Perhaps the arrival of William Smith and John Phillips in York (Phillips on foot) was not entirely fortuitous. In any event, this was a turning point in the career of John Phillips – and, indeed, of the Philosophical Society. For the next 30 or so years Phillips was a dominant figure in the Society, and in the study of the geology of Yorkshire and beyond.

Colin Speakman's first two chapters bring us up to the point at which the principal actor emerges onto the Yorkshire stage. The reader is poised to consider the vast sweep of Yorkshire landscape, of its underlying geology, and of Phillips' role in illuminating the former and understanding the

latter. The following chapters centre on areas of Yorkshire – the Coast, Wolds and Moors, and the Dales – and major episodes in Phillips' career, such as his role in the founding and success of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Then '*Absence and return to Yorkshire*' covers his (post-YPS) eminence: as he later, proudly, admitted '*Educated in no college, I have professed Geology in three Universities*': London, Dublin, and Oxford. Finally *The Legacy* summarises Phillips' impact; and *In John Phillips' Footsteps* show us where we may, literally, follow in JP's footsteps and see what he saw.

This book – lavishly illustrated – is not primarily a geological treatise: but those who think they are not particularly interested in geology will undoubtedly learn more geology than they realise, thanks to Colin Speakman's and John Phillips' enthusiasm. And all of us will appreciate learning more about the remarkable life of a remarkable man. And, of course, of a remarkable part of the world.



What better way to escape the confines of lockdown than to travel through time and space with John Phillips?

Peter Hogarth

Colin Speakman's *John Phillips. Yorkshire's traveller through time* is published by Gritstone Publishing, Hebden Bridge, and is available (online, delivered) from www.gritstonecoop.co.uk, Waterstones, or Amazon, price £15.

Colin Speakman (who is, of course, a member of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society!) has generously offered a donation to the Society for every copy sold to a YPS member via the Gritstone website. Use the PayPal facility and put 'YPS' after your name when ordering.

Support your Society while enjoying a good read – you know it makes sense!

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Etheldred Benett and the Making of Museums

We had been planning to install an exhibition in the entrance showcase of the Yorkshire Museum on March 23rd but obviously we were overtaken by national and international events. This would have presented the research from Emily Markham, M.A. student at the University of York, on the development of museum collections with particular reference to early geologist Etheldred Benett who donated fossils to the Yorkshire Museum in 1831. We hoped this would help to celebrate Etheldred's work as a geologist and to make her connection with YPS better known. Dr Sarah King, Science Curator at the Yorkshire Museum, has facilitated this research and we still hope to mount the display in the future. For now here's an outline of Emily's research.

The Making of Museums

Early museums displayed objects collected by enthusiasts, societies and lay people. In 1830, the Yorkshire Museum was opened by the Yorkshire Philosophical Society (founded 1822) to display their large collections of geological and archaeological objects.

Many of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society's collections were donated by people both local to Yorkshire and based around the country. The donors may have been enthusiasts with specialist knowledge who strove to discover more about their subject.

A citizen's science

The word 'scientist' was coined in the 1830s. In the early nineteenth century, science was understood as 'natural philosophy', or the study of nature. The idea that scientific research took place in a university laboratory was a later development.

Instead, fieldwork was a large part of scientific study in the first half of the nineteenth century. Enthusiasts could study in their own homes without needing to access a laboratory. Middle-class collectors could make important discoveries and they could contribute to their field.

Etheldred Benett: Pioneering Woman Geologist

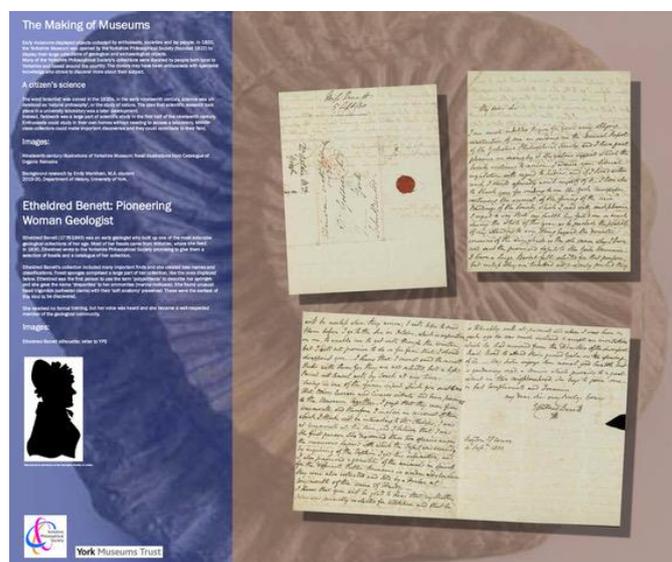
Etheldred Benett (1776-1845) was an early geologist who built up one of the most extensive geological collections of her age. Most of her fossils came from Wiltshire, where she lived.

In 1830, Etheldred wrote to the Yorkshire Philosophical Society promising to give them a selection of fossils and a catalogue of her collection.

Etheldred Benett's collection included many important finds and she created new names and classifications. Fossil sponges comprised a large part of her collection. Etheldred was the first person to use the term '*polypothechia*' to describe her sponges and she gave the name '*drepanites*' to her ammonites (marine molluscs). She found unusual fossil *trigoniids* (saltwater clams) with their 'soft anatomy' preserved. These were the earliest of this kind to be discovered.

She received no formal training, but her voice was heard and she became a well-respected member of the geological community.

Emily Markham



Contemporary Scientist no. 1

Dr Sarah Moller, atmospheric chemist

Air Pollution Theme Leader and Independent Knowledge Exchange Fellow, National Centre for Atmospheric Science, University of York.



Photo of Dr Sarah Moller at Aviva, York, taken by her colleague Chris Anthony

“Across the UK measurements are made of levels of air pollution, and I am interested in how we can make better use of that routine data to answer research questions and provide information about how air pollution is changing. This air pollution-monitoring site, on a balcony in York city centre, is a collaboration between Aviva and the National Centre for Atmospheric Science.

I also work with scientists and policy makers to develop the mechanisms by which air pollution research like mine informs and supports robust policymaking. Understanding the needs, concerns and interests of policy makers then influences research direction, enabling the air pollution community to carry out scientific research that has greater potential to inform policy decisions in the future.”

The Lodge and its Architect

Looking at Victorian buildings, especially at their brickwork, terracotta and tiles, has recently become a hobby of mine; York may not be celebrated for its Victorian work, but there is plenty here. This is the introduction to an article which will shortly appear in full on the YPS website and was compiled at the request of our Clerk, Frances Chambers, after I had told her that a short entry about the YPS Lodge had been contributed by me to the web-site www.victorianweb.org; she thought perhaps I could extend it for members. It has been written during ‘lock-down’ and, consequently, although the exteriors of buildings could be photographed during

exercise periods, it was not possible to go inside any of them, and the buildings described had to be restricted to York. On the other hand, though buildings and libraries were closed, it was a revelation how much could be read and seen on the internet; most sections conclude with a note of sources which may be of interest. I am a beginner in ‘local history’ and have been helped and encouraged by many more practiced friends and acquaintances, so thanks to them.

The Lodge was purpose-built for the Society in 1873-4 as a gatekeeper’s house at the principal entrance to its gardens. Since the 1840s the gatekeeper had rather awkwardly occupied part of a house in this position. Within a few years of its being built, and shortly after the death in 1878 of the Society’s long-serving and influential head gardener Henry Baines, his unmarried daughter Fanny became gatekeeper; she lived in the lodge until her death in 1916 (Hogarth & Anderson 2018). Aged about 12 in 1844, she is probably one of the two girls in a striped dress in the calotype photo included in last year’s exhibition in the Museum Gardens. Since 1961 there has been public entrance to the Gardens, so no need for a resident gatekeeper, but the Lodge is still used by the Society as its office and meeting-place.

P. J. Hogarth & E.W. Anderson, *‘The most fortunate situation’: the story of York’s Museum Gardens* (2018). The National Galleries of Scotland hold a collection of calotypes taken at the BAAS conference in Museum Gardens in 1844 which includes the illustration of the Baines family. Copies were exhibited on panels in the Gardens in 2019 in a project instigated by Margaret Leonard – see our web-site www.ypsyork.org and search for ‘calotype’.



The architect of the YPS Lodge was George Fowler Jones who had been born in Aberdeen in 1818 (though different years are given, and the Wikipedia biography records a descendant saying he was born in Inverness). As a young man he studied photography under William Henry Fox Talbot for a time, and in later life he exhibited watercolours as an amateur, but he trained as an architect. By 1839 he was working at the York office of Sir Sydney Smirke, and from about 1843 he lived and worked independently in York, his connections in Scotland fading out once he was settled here. In the local 'Pevsner' (N. Pevsner & D. Neave, *Yorkshire: York and the East Riding*, 1995/2002; hereafter P&N) on pp. 90-1, where the local architects working in York are discussed, Jones is described as 'competent' and specialising in Gothic churches and schools - though he did more than that, as can be seen from the tabulated selection which will be at the end of the full article on our website, and especially the biographical article in Wikipedia noted below. Jones was not famous, known nationally, but like many busy Victorian architects, he had a varied output. By the 1870s he had the assistance of his son, Gascoigne, while another son, Robert, was articulated to him in 1882. Jones retired in 1893, and died at Malton in 1905. The business was continued by his sons, but probably ceased before the first World War. After his death, about 2000 of his negatives were donated to the Royal Photographic Society; in 2017 their collection was acquired by the V&A and is in storage. Some prints of his buildings survive locally, and he left a few photographs of his restoration at Stonegrave, for example.

Notes on 'York Artists' by John Ward Knowles are archived in York Explore Library and are available as a pdf (ref. KNO/3/5);

www.explore.york.org.uk/archives/our-collections/ Knowles belonged to a York family of stained glass artists, and for a few months himself worked in Jones' Monkgate office. York Explore library has more: searching the archive with 'George Fowler Jones' brings up a photo of Jones in academics - perhaps after being elected RIBA in 1868 (ID1002400). Also a view of his house in Bootham; Clifton church on completion c. 1867; Heworth church in 1870 with a glimpse of the vicarage, and views of two of his three triumphal arches for the visit to York of the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1866. Several of these pictures were taken by him, and there are two lovely snow scenes of things he certainly had not built.

Wikipedia has a very full biographical article and the longest list of his works at

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Fowler_Jones

This was compiled some years ago by Nick Browne who used to own Jones' Castle Oliver in Ireland; see also www.scottisharchitects.org.uk
www.historiccamera.com
www.parlington.co.uk/photos.lasso

Jones worked on many sites in Yorkshire other than York, designing new public and domestic buildings, and designing and restoring churches. Readers may recall a glimpse from the A1(M) of the Gascoigne Almshouses at Aberford in the West Riding; this is his first known commission, 1843-5. It seems to be the only building of his that achieved Grade II* in the Heritage Listing. The artistic Oliver Gascoigne sisters who commissioned it were to be important to his career; they also funded the new church at nearby Garforth, and Castle Oliver in Ireland. Such patronage was a most fortunate beginning for him. Perhaps they shared a taste in watercolours, or photography.

The 'Index of Artists' (P&N p. 805) has 22 references under "Jones, George Fowler" and 8 of these are buildings in the East Riding; his son Gascoigne is indexed for the east window he designed in 1906 for St Paul's, Holgate Road. I have not been able to see the West Riding volume, or any others. www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/

Rita Wood

Gardens News

Hello everyone, it has been so dry recently that I would welcome a couple of days of steady rain to support all of the Spring growth in the Gardens (both Museum Gardens and my garden at home). Whilst many of the Trust's staff are furloughed, including myself, our Gardeners Kevin and John continue to maintain the Gardens so that when we do re-open to the public the Gardens will look well cared for. They have been able to lay out a network of hosepipes so that they can give the newly planted beds a good drink.

Before lockdown we had started work on the border (loose term) opposite the Rock Garden alongside the path that leads to St Mary's Abbey church ruins. It was known as the winter border but I didn't feel that there was enough of a range of winter plants to warrant that title. I prefer to increase the number of winter-interest plants across the whole Garden than dedicate a small bed to this end. Instead, I want this bed and general area to become more 'woody' in nature and include flowering shrubs that will enjoy the mixture of dappled light (and some full sunshine in places) that this aspect provides. We managed to obtain some of the plants for my plan prior to lockdown and get them in the ground; notably the shrubs *Exochorda*, *Deutzia* and *Cotinus* and some of the underplanting that will provide a carpet of spring flowers. I'm particularly pleased to introduce *Omphalodes cappadocica* 'Cherry Ingram' to the Garden as it is a favourite of mine (see photo on page 1). I imagine the azure blue flowers stopping people in their tracks for a moment each Spring.

I am keen to introduce some specimen trees during my tenure to add to the existing impressive collection. I sourced a semi-mature *Betula albosinensis* var. *septentrionalis* (Chinese Red Birch) which has been planted in the bed near the YPS Lodge and has a wonderful coppery-pink bark and I look forward to seeing this lovely tree develop. The tree's slim, neat upright habit will provide some height to this bed and sit well with the existing birch. In time I'd like to introduce a third notable birch – odd numbers always work best in terms of balance whatever the plant / shrub / tree unless your intention is formality (e.g. an avenue of limes or two identical shrubs either side of a run of steps).

Whilst I look forward to returning to the Gardens I can take some solace from the fact that nature and the grass will get a chance to flourish. I wonder how long it has been since the grass has had such an opportunity to take a break from constant, high-level footfall. It surely should do it good. Also, the lack of visitors during nesting season will hopefully have encouraged more birds to nest in the Gardens. I say this knowing a pair of Goldcrests are nesting in one of our Yew trees close to the main path – I suspect this isn't a regular occurrence!

I hope everyone is keeping well and I look forward to the time when we can all get back to what we took for granted – freedom of movement. I suspect it will be a slower road than we would choose to take but we will get there.



Finally, a photo of my greenhouse which has been getting a lot of attention recently and hopefully is producing some plants that I will be able to contribute to the Gardens in the not too distant future.

Best wishes, Steve Williams

Exploration from your armchair

We are sharing some web resources that may be familiar to members but that several of us have enjoyed exploring, including some which are now free for a limited amount of time. Do let us have your suggestions for the next newsletter.

York Museums Trust

<https://www.yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/museums-from-home/>

More details of how to access the collections from home have been added in the new "Museums from Home" section.

York Minster Stained Glass Navigator

<https://stainedglass-navigator.yorkglazierstrust.org>

The Chapter of York Minster, York Glaziers Trust and the York Minster Fund have developed this new resource to view up close details of the Great East Window and the St Cuthbert Window.

The National Archives

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/digital-downloads/>

The National Archives are making their resources free to download as long as their Kew site is closed to visitors. There is a limit of 10 items per day and 50 over a 30 day period.

JSTOR (free access to 30th June 2020)

<https://about.jstor.org/oa-and-free/>

JSTOR provides a digital library of academic resources. Many of the academic journal papers about COVID-19 can be read here alongside access to many academic journals and books.

The **Society of Antiquaries** has an excellent list of online resources at <https://www.sal.org.uk/news/>

The British Museum Collections

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection>

There is a new version of the collection online, which allows access to the four and a half million objects in the collection.

YorkTalks 2020

<https://www.york.ac.uk/research/events/yorktalks/>

A selection of 15 minute talks given on 8th January by York University researchers including a past, and possibly some future, YPS speakers.

TED Talks

https://www.ted.com/talks/david_r_liu_can_we_cure_genetic_diseases_by_rewriting_dna

https://www.ted.com/talks/karen_lloyd_the_mysterious_microbes_living_deep_inside_the_earth_and_how_the_y_could_help_humanity

https://www.ted.com/talks/sheperd_doeleman_inside_the_black_hole_image_that_made_history

If you'd like to know more about Covid-19:

The Conversation

<https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-governments-knew-a-pandemic-was-a-threat-heres-why-they-werent-better-prepared-136857>

<https://theconversation.com/coronaviruses-a-brief-history-135506>

<https://theconversation.com/three-charts-that-show-where-the-coronavirus-death-rate-is-heading-137103>

COVID-ZOE website

<https://covid.joinzoe.com/post/covid-cases-fall>

<https://covid.joinzoe.com/post/covid-decreasing-uk>

FullFact

<https://fullfact.org/online/wuhan-5g-coronavirus/>

For an easy-to-follow **guide to spotting “phishing” emails** (the ones that look genuine but aren't):

<https://www.mittas.co.uk/blog/a-quick-lesson-in-phishing-emails/>

And finally, do keep an eye on our own website and Frances' twice-weekly blog, **“The Clerk in the Country”** on rural life past and present. To whet your appetite:

“Anyone surprised by the fights over toilet rolls in supermarket aisles has only to see the two sparrows outside my window engaged in a passionate tug of war with a length of dry grass ... to realize that wanting what someone else has is not just a human trait.”

“... after an autumn so wet that crops couldn't be sown, it's only in the last few weeks that farmers have been able to get onto their land to plant cereals.”

“It's not the first time that floods and disease have coincided in this area. In the autumn of 1918 ... the Selby Times carried the story of extensive floods near the town ... As we do today, the community pulled together: ‘It was only through the kindness of those who had carts that people could be got away from village to village’.”

Diary

We are tentatively beginning to re-schedule postponed events and arrange new ones, but please note that all of the following dates and events are subject to change in the light of anti-Covid-19 measures prevailing at the time. Further information will follow in our next newsletter, planned for August, and on the website: www.ypsyork.org

2020

Thurs 10 Sept, 2.30pm to 4.30pm

YPS Get-Together – venue to be confirmed

Tues 22 Sept, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

An overview of Sirius Minerals North Yorkshire polyhalite project: opportunities and engineering challenges - Matt Parsons (General Manager External Affairs) and Mark Pooleman MEng CEng MICE (Project Engineer), Sirius Minerals (*re-scheduled from 23 March*)

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30 pm – Café Scientifique

Achieving farming's Net Zero challenge - Andrew Loftus and James Mills

Wed 2 Dec, 7.30 pm – Café Scientifique

A Landscape History of North East Yorkshire - Dr Laura Eddey (*re-scheduled from 1 April*)

2021

Tues 9 Mar, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

The Enemy Between Us: The Impact of Inequality - Professor Kate Pickett & Professor Richard Wilkinson (*re-scheduled from 21 April*)

Tues 27 Apr, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

Relative sea-level changes and the history of the Greenland Ice Sheet - Dr Sarah Woodroffe, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, University of Durham (*re-scheduled from 5 May*)

York Festival of Ideas 2020

Tuesday 2 to Sunday 14 June

This year's Festival of Ideas is online with a special collection of



events covering science, technology, archaeology, social sciences, philosophy, history, art, poetry, literature and dance and speakers including Jim Al-Khalili and Adam Hart.

Participation in live talks on Zoom or YouTube can be booked online and there will be the possibility to watch again via the FOI website and even order books by the speakers. For full details go to:

<http://yorkfestivalofideas.com/2020-online/>