Founded 1822

Yorkshire Philosophical Society

NEWSLETTER

Yorkshire Philosophical Society

Promoting the public understanding of science since 1822

The Lodge, Museum Gardens, York, YO1 7DR, 01904 656713, info@ypsyork.org, www.ypsyork.org

From the Chair

Dear Members,

Eighteen months ago, the Council held a "blue sky" day to discuss ideas for the future. We listed a lot of strengths, including – of course – our lecture programme and our clerk, Frances Chambers.

We agreed we could do more to raise the Society's profile. In recent years, we've mainly recruited members by word of mouth: existing members tell their friends, their friends attend a lecture or two and hey presto, we have new members.

That's excellent and long may it continue. But at the blue sky day, someone said "YPS isn't well-known in York: potential members simply haven't heard of us".

With this Newsletter

- Programme for Winter 2025-26
- Tour to Kent, 14-18 May 2026
- Subscription renewal form for 2026 (for members without standing orders)

If anything is missing, contact Frances Chambers as below.

LARGE PRINT COPIES OF THIS NEWSLETTER ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST FROM info@ypsyork.org or 01904 656713.

Opinions expressed in the articles that follow are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the YPS.

Donncha & Issy at University of York postgraduate information fair, September 2025 Photo: D Harbourne

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Someone else mentioned that we don't do much on social media. Putting these ideas together, we said we should recruit a social media volunteer (or indeed a team) to promote YPS on X, Facebook, Instagram, Bluesky and so on.

It took a while, but this summer a student named Alex Higton generously stepped forward. Her family relocated to York not long ago and she liked the idea of helping us spread the word.

Alex opened an Instagram account for us – https://www.instagram.com/ypsyork/ – and honestly, it's stunning!

Alex's designs are eye-catching, informative and beautiful. I couldn't do what she does, ever. She also shares news with other accounts, helping us reach people who perhaps never knew we existed. Thank you, Alex!

As a result of Alex's amazing work, we've welcomed a lot of new members this autumn. If you're one of them – thank you for joining. I hope you enjoy our programme as much as I do and that you'll share your own ideas for future lectures, visits and activities with us over the coming months.

Sally Osgerby and I also took part in this year's freshers' fairs at the University of York. YPS membership is free for students in full-time education and I'm delighted to say that well over 100 students joined over the two days we were there. It's been a pleasure seeing some of them at recent lectures and Cafés Scientifique. On top of that, some of our new student members have said they'd like to volunteer with us. Another big thank you!

Student membership runs from September to August in line with the academic year. For all other members, the subscription year ends on 31 December, so now is the time to think about renewing your membership. We are not increasing subscription rates this year so if you pay by standing order, everything should go through automatically. If you don't have a standing order set up, you can pay by bank transfer, Paypal, or by card or cash either at the Lodge or at one of our lectures. Alternatively you can even send a cheque through the post.

We look forward to seeing you at our remaining events in November and December, and throughout 2026. On behalf of all of us, very best wishes for Christmas and the new year.

David Harbourne

York Museums Trust News

Sugar, Skill and Shiftwork: York's Confectionary Workers

at the Castle Museum

26 September 2025 to 25 September 2026

York Castle Museum is proud to present a new community exhibition, **Sugar, Skill and Shiftwork: York's Confectionery Workers**, celebrating the history of confectionery in York and the people that contributed towards the world-famous industry's success during its heyday.

This exhibition shares the voices and experiences of the confectionery community, from factory workers, engineers, designers, packers and others, including personal memories, stories and reflections as they recall working life in York's sweet factories, such as Rowntree's, Terry's and Craven's.

In the 100th anniversary year of Joseph Rowntree (1836 – 1925), this special exhibition highlights the legacy of confectionery businesses in York and features over 50 objects from York Museums Trust and items loaned by the public. Expect to see photographs and objects including nostalgic confectionery boxes, wrappers and packets, worker's dress, recipe books and items related to unions and workers' rights.

Your entry ticket is valid for a year and this year's "Christmas at the Castle Museum" runs from 15 November to 4 January.

Supporting YMT

For general support for York Museums Trust, including the Yorkshire Museum, this is the link:

https://www.yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/support-the-trust/donations/

The Lodge Library

From Tuesday 27 January we will have a volunteer in the Lodge Library for members to drop in on days when there is an evening lecture. The session will be from 2pm to 5pm and feel free to pop in for a few minutes or an hour or two. The first sessions will be:

- 27 January
- 10 February
- 24 February
- 24 March

If this proves useful and we have more volunteers, we will increase these days to other afternoons.

News from the Activities Group

We have had a very busy summer of visits and activities. I do hope you have managed to join us on one or more of these. Particular thanks must go to Catherine Brophy and Dorothy Nott for all their hard work organising these for us.

Our second Tuesday of the month lunchtime get-togethers at the Theatre Royal have continued to be popular. Do try to come along to meet old friends or to make new ones in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

On Monday 11th August, we had the chance to take a further look at how the building work is progressing in the Minster Precinct. This aims to be a world class facility for research, education and training for ancient craft skills as well as modern technology. This was our third visit and it proved to be very interesting and informative, as always.

On 28th August, there was a visit to Cliffe Castle Museum in Keighley to see the British Museum's touring exhibition of drawn and sculpted ice age art, some of which dates back over 24,000 years. Most of us travelled by train and shared taxis from the station to the museum. We were very pleasantly surprised at the low cost of the taxi fares! The museum was well worth the visit and in addition to the ice age art, we marvelled at a gorgeous malachite fireplace as well as lots of taxidermy, geological displays, and beautiful Victorian glasshouses.

On September 4th, we had another day trip, this time by coach to Quarry Bank Mill in Wilmslow, Cheshire.

This is a National Trust property and is a huge cotton mill with some machinery still working. There are displays showing how different life was for the mill-owning Greg family and the local people they employed. I have written a more detailed account of this visit elsewhere in the newsletter.

On the Thursday of the next week, 11th September, there was another coach trip to Harewood House to view the exhibition celebrating Jane Austen and J. M. W. Turner's 250th anniversary, so it was of particular interest to those who visited Austen's Chawton on our May study tour to Hampshire. Austen and Turner never actually met each other so we were invited to speculate upon what they may have said to each other. We very much enjoyed seeing several of Turner's paintings (mostly watercolours) and sketches. There were interpretive panels showing information about Austen's work and exhibitions illustrating how her work has been so influential on books, film and television up to the modern day. *(Photos: thanks to Catherine Brophy)*

We then had a most interesting day out on 2nd October, again by coach. We were joined by members of YANT (the York Association for the National Trust) and first visited the fairly new railway museum close to Darlington North station. It is called Hopetown after a station that used to be there and has been made possible using grants from The Railway Heritage Trust among other funding bodies. A curator took us round the museum and we had free time to visit exhibitions showing railway history and items from the stores, as well as engines that were on site due to the 200 year railway anniversary. The coach then took us to Preston Park where we walked down to the Tees and boarded a boat called The Tees Princess. Here we joined members of the Cleveland National Trust supporters group for a

cruise on the river during which we enjoyed a lovely afternoon tea. Further details of this day out are included elsewhere in the newsletter.

On October 9th there was yet another coach trip, along with YANT members to Bolsover Castle on the edge of the Peak district. This is an English Heritage property, originally 11th century, but extensively remodelled in 1600, including building an enormous riding house. We had tours by volunteers of the gardens, including the newly renovated fountain garden. We were also taken round the little castle and admired the art it contained.

Future events Planned:

On Wednesday 12th November, there will be an outing using our own transport to Allerton Waste Recovery Park, near Knaresborough where we will learn how our waste is reused, recycled or turned into energy and then look round to see all this happening. This has proved to be very popular so there will be a repeat visit on 26th November for those we have been unable to accommodate on the 12th.

Our final event planned this year is the Annual Dinner on Tuesday 2nd December. This will be held again at the central Novotel which has convenient parking and was praised last year for good food and friendly staff. There will be a post dinner address by Professor Nicky Milner OBE.

We will continue our second Tuesday in the month lunchtime get-togethers throughout the winter, but there will be no December meeting because of the pantomime matinees.

The Activities Group is in the process of planning visits and excursions for 2026. Thanks to Dorothy Nott, there is a study tour planned in conjunction with Just for Groups for 14th to 18th May to Kent. Details of the tour itinerary and how to book are included in this newsletter.

Rosemary Anderton

Important Notice—Insurance

The YPS accepts no responsibility for any loss or injury suffered while taking part in one of its trips or events. Participants are advised to take out appropriate travel insurance, which should include cancellation and accident cover. For full details please see *https://www.ypsyork.org/groups/social-group/yps-activities-booking-terms-conditions-2/*
NB our insurers are no longer able to provide any cover for participants in our activities who are aged over 80.

Annual Dinner (& a presentation on Wills)

We are delighted to announce that this year's Dinner will be particularly well-attended. This is in great part thanks to Sharon Lusty's wonderful work in arranging the venue and choosing the menu but this time we must also thank Crombie Wilkinson Solicitors for their kind sponsorship of this event, which has enabled us to counter the ever-increasing costs of hospitality. We look forward to welcoming two representatives of the firm on December 2nd.

As a further service to the Society, Emma Morris of Crombie Wilkinson will be giving an online presentation on Wills for us via Zoom at 6.30pm on Monday 19th January 2026. All members are invited; please register your interest in advance by notifying Frances Chambers by email to info@ypsyork.org or in person at the Lodge.

YPS Members' monthly lunch

Don't forget to join us next year for our drop-in monthly lunches upstairs in the Circle Bar at the Theatre Royal from 12.00pm onwards (order your food and drink in the downstairs café). There is no lunch in December because of pantomime season at the Theatre, but come along on any of the dates below; no need to book. New members are particularly welcome.

- Tuesday 13th January
- Tuesday 10th February
- Tuesday 10th March
- Tuesday 14th April

Trailblazers Project

Local History Group

By the time you read this we shall have held our last meeting of 2025, on November 18th. It has been a successful year for the group, including a very enjoyable historical tour of the Museum Gardens in spring and an interesting and useful autumn visit to York City Archive, as well as our regular meetings to share ideas and the results of our research.

We plan to continue in 2026 and hope to publish some of our work in the YPS blog. If you are interested in joining us, please email cafesci@ypsyork.org Non-members are also welcome.

Catherine Brophy, Project Lead

Notes from the Geology Group

1a Online material for self-guided trips: Geology of Fountains Abbey

Wandering the valley alongside the Abbey, outcrops of the Carboniferous Millstone Grit, Lower Plumpton Grit, used to build the abbey complex can be seen. Sitting unconformably on top of the gritstone is Permian Magnesian Limestone (Cadeby Formation) which can be seen in the Seven Bridges Valley where the River Skell vanishes underground. The glacial valley of the River Skell deeply cuts through the higher terrain. Moraine and glacial erratics can be seen walking south from the West Entrance. Walls change from gritstone to limestone and rounded cobbles. The Abbey church ruins have finer details carved in the limestone and pillars of crinoidal Nidderdale Marble, a polishable Carboniferous limestone. A wide variety of exotic stones can be seen in St Mary's Church, built by Willaim Burges.

ur Geological Adventures Fountains Abbey
East Midlands GS Fountains Abbey
English Heritage St Mary's Studley Royal
The Victorian Web Burges and St Mary's Church

1b Events and Talks: Online and in person:

Joint YPS/YGS symposium: Women in Geology
Saturday 15th November: 10.15am-4.30pm
Tempest Anderson Hall, Yorkshire Museum.
YPS/YGS Conference Women in Geology 15th November

YGS AGM and President's Day Saturday 6th December. 1pm, Weetwood Hall Leeds.
YGS AGM 6th December

2 Women and Men in Geology

Louis Agassiz (1807-1873)

Agassiz is noted for his five-volume work on fossil fish and his system of classification, his work on glaciation and his teaching and writing in America after he moved there in 1846. His opposition to Darwin's theory of evolution, denying that all humans had a common ancestor, but that races reflected differing species with different ranks, had an influence on scientific racism which supported systematic racial segregation in the US.

Geol Soc Louis Agassiz
Wiki Louis Agassiz

3 Study and Resources: Glacial Theory

In 1837, Agassiz proposed a glacial character for much of the widespread, unstratified superficial deposits seen in UK and Europe. He noted erratic boulders transported within the Alps and from the Alps to the Jura. He postulated a worldwide fall in temperature as the cause of a glacial epoch and modern glaciers being the remains of a general ice sheet. (Lyell had supplemented a great flood theory of superficial deposits with a floating ice cause for the transport of erratic boulders.) Buckland visited Agassiz in the Alps and considering glacial traces in Scotland helped spread the glacial ides to Lyell and Darwin. Murchison used his eloquence and influence to oppose Agassiz's ice sheet and expound his own preference for marine deposition along with ice bergs, local glaciation and terrestrial melt water. The acceptance of glacial theory in Britain was put back thirty years until the work of James Croll and James and Arthur Geikie.

The Early History of Glacial Theory in British Geology Bert Hansen
Lyell, the Geikies and Croll's observations on terrestrial James Rose

4 Real Trips outside:

Yorkshire Coast Rocks: Yorkshire Coast Rocks
York's Hidden History: York's Hidden History Eventbrite

5 Our Yorkshire Museum of the Month:

If in Swaledale, The Swaledale Museum in Reeth seems to share its collection with the Old School Museum in Keld. There is also a display in the Muker Literary Institute.

Swaledale Museum
Keld Resource Centre
Muker Literary Institute

6 Books and Mags:

Down to Earth Extra for November: articles and commercial geological tours.

Down to Earth Extra November 2025

This Volcanic Isle by Robert Muir-Wood has been well received. Mainly focused on the Cenozoic in the UK

Oxford UP. This Volcanic Isle Robert Muir-Wood
Review This Volcanic Isle

Paul Thornley

A visit to the Jantar Mantar at Jaipur, India

In February this year, I visited the Jantar Mantar in Jaipur, one of five observatories constructed by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, ruler of Amer (and later Jaipur), Rajasthan.

Jai Singh was born in 1688 and became Maharaja at the age of 12. He founded Jaipur – literally "Jai's City" – in 1729. He was a scholar, making a particular study of astronomy and astrology. However, he became frustrated by hand-held instruments such as astrolabes: wear and tear reduced their accuracy over time.

Jantar Mantar Jaipur - entrance

Jai Singh's solution was to build massive astronomical instruments. He understood that sheer size would increase accuracy, and that building them from solid materials would keep them in peak condition for many years.

Jaipur's Jantar Mantar (literally, "calculation instrument") was built between 1728 and 1730. It consists of nineteen instruments, each with its own specialist function.

The largest instrument of all is a giant sundial, the Samrat Yantra. The triangular structure in the centre is thought to be the largest gnomon in the world, standing 27.5m high. It casts a shadow onto two quarter circles (am and pm) inclined to the plane of the equator. Each is divided into hours, quarter hours and minutes; each minute is further subdivided into ten units of six seconds. Thanks to the sheer size, it is possible to watch time pass as the shadow moves inexorably along the quarter circles. It is accurate to within two seconds a year.

If the Samrat Yantra is the simplest instrument, the Jai Prakash Yantra is the most complex.

Hemispherical sundials have been used since at least 300 BCE to observe the position of celestial objects. In the case of the Jai Prakash Yantra, a doughnut-shaped metal plate suspended above the centre of the bowl casts a shadow on the interior of the bowl, which is inscribed with an inverted map of the sky. Naturally, the shadow falls at different points depending on the time of day and the day of the year. This allows the observer to note, for example, the position of the sun relative to each of the signs of the zodiac at the precise moment of observation. The metal plate also serves as a sighting device for night observations.

That is already impressive, but Jai Singh took the concept to the next level. His Prakash Yantra comprises not one bowl, but two. Each has paths cut into the bowl so that observations can be taken by stepping down into the bowl. However, where bowl 1 has an inscribed

One of the two bowls which form the Prakash Yantra at Jantar Mantar Jaipur

surface, bowl 2 has a path, and vice versa: if one bowl could be superimposed on the other, they would fit together perfectly to form a single hemisphere.

The Prakash Yantra was also used to calibrate and verify the accuracy of other instruments including the Rashi Valaya Yantra – a set of 12 sundials for each zodiac sign.

David Harbourne

Further reading:

The Astronomical Observatories of Jai Singh: www.jantarmantar.org

All photos: David Harbourne

View of Jantar Mantar with Samrat Yantra in the background, the zodiac sundials - Rasivalaya Yantra - on the right and Prakash Yantra in the foreground

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Gardens News

I've been glad to see the rain after what was a very dry Spring and Summer. It was an exciting period for the Gardens as we hosted a number of events such as the second year of the Future Sound concerts with Elbow headlining the four days of music and comedy that attracted 16,000 people. It was also a challenging one due to the prolonged drought. The team worked hard to ensure the Garden still had a 'wow' factor throughout, and I made decisions to postpone the planned planting activities until later in the year in favour of nursing the Garden. We have two 3500 litre rainwater capture tanks but they only stretch so far in prolonged dry conditions. We do have another three 1000 litre tanks being installed by Geoff and the Estates Team at the rear of the Art Gallery (under the external stairs so they aren't visible) which will fortify us somewhat from a sustainability perspective.

The wildflower meadow at the rear of the Art Gallery was a good 30/40cm shorter than in 2024 due to the lack of moisture in the ground. It's the trees that concern me the most as the bigger the plant structure, the longer it takes for them to show signs of stress and we have seen more of these long dry periods over the last few years. Trees usually burst into leaf in early May expending a lot of energy and in hot conditions they lose a lot of water through transpiration, and windy conditions increase that rate of loss.

We need to help our trees and there is a reason that they drop their leaves at their feet so we are adopting a couple of practices that will assist them. Last year we started leaving leaf fall around the base of some of our more mature / veteran deciduous trees and we will continue to do this. We are also receiving a more regular supply of woodchip from Steel & Maw (our chosen arboriculturists) that we can use as an additional layer of mulch around the tree bases. Both these practices will help keep more moisture in the ground along with the biochar (a charcoal like substance that helps with moisture-retention and holds minerals in place / accessible for trees. I am investigating methods of aeration for tree roots as this is something that can assist our older trees by relieving compaction and ensuring they are able to access what they need as easily as possible.

Early October, we added 3 tonnes of well rotted manure and mushroom compost mix to the long woodland border that runs on the right hand side from the Main Gate towards the Multangular Tower. This will enrich the soil for the

Harland Planters during the dry summer conditions

plants and trees and again assist with moisture retention. I have been formulating a strategy to systematically improve the conditions around the Garden prioritising those areas that are particularly tired.

In terms of the lawns, the heady mixture of drought plus the Garden hosting an increasing number of events means we need to adapt and improve our grass maintenance in order to build that resilience and ability for the grass to recover as swiftly as possible. Plans are in place.

Despite all the challenges, we were very pleased to be presented with Best in Category and Platinum awards by Yorkshire In Bloom in association with the RHS in September (for the second year running – no pressure for 2026 then...). This recognised not only the horticultural practices but also the variety of unique activities and community engagements that YMT offers within the Garden that make this such a special and welcoming place for everyone. We're heading in the right direction and the things we do make a positive difference to York's residents and visitors.

The Harland Miller planters I told you about last time were a success with lots of positive feedback received. I'm told by the Art Gallery team that Harland was photographed with his family in front of them on a few occasions when they visited together. Well done to Garden Supervisor Isabelle who coordinated the seed sowing / nurturing of young plants in the polytunnel.

It's a busy period again (when is it not?!) with Ghosts in the Garden, Thor's Tipi being installed, tours for York's Environmental Festival 2025, and the illuminating Echoes of Yorkshire on the near horizon, 8000 Spring Bulbs to plant and the leaves have started to fall.

Steve Williams
York Museums Trust

Photos: Steve Williams

Carl Alsop of York BID setting up the Penny Farthing ghost in the garden

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Congratulations to Steve and the Gardens team on their well-deserved success in the Yorkshire in Bloom Awards. The Judges' notes begin: "It was delightful to visit this lovely spot on a pleasant summer afternoon. The combination of beautiful gardens and amazing archaeological remains is wonderful. The amount of care that goes into this beautiful place is simply amazing and it was wonderful to tour the gardens with someone whose knowledge of horticulture was obviously so deep and impressive." If you would like to read more and see the suggestions made, the report is at: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.yorkshireinbloom.co.uk/_files/ugd/929b68_f3c5348f6af24b7aa90c2f7bd8fedd4f.pdf

Visit to Quarry Bank MIll

Thursday 4th September 2025

Our coach arrived at this impressive site late morning and we made our way downhill towards the huge 5-floor mill building next to the river Bollin. Inside there were exhibitions telling how Samuel Greg, a Belfast man came to Manchester with the idea of creating a huge cotton-spinning complex. He and his engineers rerouted the river to turn an enormous water wheel to power all the factory machinery. The mill opened in 1784 and for the next 50 years, the valley was transformed with new buildings, landscaping and gardens.

Samuel's wife Hannah was a religious woman and quite an intellectual. Together they built a family home, Quarry Bank House, next door to the mill. Hannah preferred living here compared to dirty, noisy Manchester and she hosted lively social gatherings and debates here. Quarry Bank House was open for viewing but although few of the original interior artefacts remained, it was still lovely to see the elegant rooms where the Greg family raised their 13 children.

The mill building itself also contained information about what life would have been like for the hundreds of people employed there. Wages were low for such a long day doing a very dangerous job. Whereas men had opportunities for promotion to become engineers or supervisors, women were paid considerably less and rarely had the chance to better themselves. The original mill machinery had been removed but there was a water wheel and examples of many of the machines

that would have been there in Samuel Greg's time brought in from other mills in the area.

Raw cotton was imported to Liverpool and brought to Quarry Bank by road, then later by canal. There were demonstrations showing how the cotton was treated and turned into thread, then yarn and fabric. Just one of the machines working was very noisy so we can only imagine what the din would have been like when a whole mill full of machinery was in operation! The mill employees worked from 6am to 7pm, six days a week. A lot of the employees lived in Styal, a nearby hamlet which was extended greatly by Greg to accommodate the increasing workforce.

In the basement there were very impressive working steam engines which were installed later to supplement the water power as the river's speed was inconsistent.

Probably the most memorable part of the visit was our tour of the apprentice house. We were shown round by a most engaging costumed guide. Up to 90 children from age 9 lived here. Many came from workhouses or orphanages as far away as London. We learned how they were given a basic but healthy diet and had the services of a doctor if they became ill, but their life was very hard with no time for play or leisure. After work the boys helped in the vegetable garden and the girls helped with cooking and other housework. On Sundays they went to church twice a day entailing a total 8 mile walk. This left little time for the basic schooling that was provided for them. However, they were looked after and working as a Quarry Bank apprentice was seen as a better option than remaining in a workhouse.

Some of us had time to explore the Chapel Woods, containing folly bridges and exotic trees, where the Greg children could wander. Others of us visited the formal gardens and beautiful glasshouse where exotic fruits would have been grown.

Thanks must go to Dorothy Nott for organising this fascinating trip, and Mick our coach driver.

Photos: Rosemary Anderton

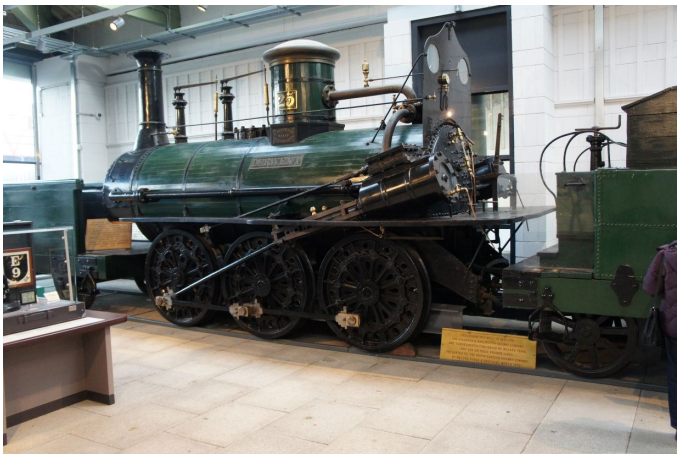
Rosemary Anderton

Visit to Hopetown Museum and Tees cruise

Thursday 2nd October 2025

YPS has played its part in commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway's opening with talks and visits, most recently with an outing to Hopetown Works Museum at Darlington. This was a joint visit with the York Association of the National Trust.

After the coach ride from York members were impressed by the expensively created museum displays and captions. Several hologram figures represent past railway workers and displays emphasise the role of George Stephenson and the Darlington Quakers such as Edward Pease and the banker, Jonathan Backhouse, often overlooked in creating the railway age.



Most museum displays are set in the former North Road station, once on the Stockton and Darlington "main line", where exhibits include the 1842 Stockton and Darlington locomotive *Derwent*, almost a classical design. Nearby is a replica of the S & D's *Locomotion,* first to run on the line, and early S & D carriages.

In the former carriage works the store contains a glorious miscellany of railway artefacts and the exhibition *Steam to the future*. What visitors made of the artwork - smoke rings blown towards a flowery field image - is not known but the rest of the exhibition seemed underwhelming.

But outside two large North Eastern steam locomotives and the last diesel locomotive to be built at North Road Works were on view. Exhibits recalled just how many other rail related industries grew up in Darlington.

Hopetown has a large new shed and workshop where new steam locomotives are assembled. Unlike the National Railway Museum, which unwisely scrapped its authentic and visible workshop, this museum has a viewing gallery to see a huge replica Gresley P2 locomotive under construction.

A bonus was seeing another new build *Tornado* in steam outside. Slightly further away - and easily missed - the former locomotive shed was open to the public with more locomotives undergoing restoration. Whether this was regular or not there were plenty of volunteers around to talk about engines and other displays; the museum was busy.

Our party followed with a coach ride to Preston Park where we joined the *Tees Princess* for afternoon tea and a 3½ hour cruise upriver to Yarm and then east to the Tees Barrier. It was a surprise to see how wide the river is and so much woodland alongside with much modern new development at Stockton and Thornaby.

We were back to York in good time to conclude an excellent trip. Thanks to Lee the driver and Catherine Brophy for organising. Thanks also to the Cleveland National Trust group for sparking the idea.

Roger Backhouse

All photos:
Roger Backhouse

Tour to Kent

Thursday 14th to Monday 18th May 2026

May 2026 will see another of our very enjoyable multi-day tours arranged with our usual travel company, Just for Groups.

We shall be visiting the National Trust properties at Belton, Knole, Chartwell and Wimpole, as well as Down House, Chiselhurst Caves, Dover Castle and the church of St Mary in Castro, and the site of St Ethelburga's 7th century church at Lyminge, which was the subject of our very interesting Zoom lecture by Rob Baldwin in March this year. We hope to meet Rob in person on our visit.

You will find further details on the flyer with this newsletter, and information packs with booking forms will be available at lectures, from the Lodge, or can be printed out from the website. Please note that booking forms should be returned to the Lodge and not sent to Just for Groups.

News just in

Congratulations to this year's archaeology prize winners: Chloe Massarella (Charles Wellbeloved Award) for her dissertation "***Art Versus Life: Value, Change and What We Have Chosen to Protect"*** and Ben Reeves (Herman Ramm Award) for his dissertation "***A theatrical entrance: Theatre Graffiti and the York Theatre Royal Gateway Folly*****".**

We hope to present their certificates to them before our lecture on 25th November, *The Viking Great Army and its Legacy* by Professors Dawn Hadley and Julian Richards.

Christmas Celebration at The Retreat

Friday 5th December, 7pm
in the Recreation Hall at The Retreat

The venue for our lecture on September 30th will host York Concert Band, a vibrant ensemble of nearly fifty talented brass, woodwind, and percussion players, for an evening of festive music and community spirit with a sparkling programme of seasonal favourites, heartwarming carols, and toe-tapping Christmas medleys.

All proceeds will be shared between two wonderful causes: Bereaved Children Support York and Children's Cancer Research Fund, also known as Friends of Rosie.

Tickets: £10 (adults) or £5 (children) plus booking fee can be obtained from:

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-christmas-celebration-tickets-1838468862859?aff=oddtdtcreator

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Lodge closure—an apology

We are very sorry that it has not been possible to open the Lodge at our regular times over recent weeks. Frances is presently suffering from an eye problem which is preventing her from driving and her 25 mile commute from the countryside is unfortunately not possible by public transport.

Frances is working from home so can be contacted by email, while post and telephone messages are being monitored regularly.

Frances looks forward to seeing members in person as soon as possible, and in the meantime thank you very much for your patience.

YPS Subscription Renewal

For members who pay their subscriptions by cheque, cash, Paypal or bank transfer, guidance on how to renew for 2026 can be found on the enclosed form (a separate attachment if you're reading this online).

If there is no form enclosed, this means your subscription will automatically be paid by standing order or has already been paid by other means, and you need do nothing. If you think the amount of your Standing Order may need up-dating, please contact Frances as soon as possible.

2026 membership cards will be sent out with our first newsletter of the new year in late January or early February. Your 2025 card remains valid until then, so please retain it.

If you have any questions about your subscription, membership category or how to renew, please contact Frances on info@ypsyork.org or 01904 656713.

Diary

Important Note: Please check the following details carefully, in particular our lectures in the Tempest Anderson Hall and our Café Scientifique talks, as times, days of the week and venues do vary. For the most up-to-date information, please keep an eye on our website: www.ypsyork.org

2025

Tue 25 Nov, 7.00pm—YPS Lecture
The Viking Great Army and its Legacy
Professors Dawn Hadley and Julian Richards, University of York
With presentation of YPS archaeology awards

Tue 2 Dec - **Annual Dinner**

Wed 3 Dec, 7.30pm—Café Sci
Venue: City Screen Basement Bar
Little Kingdoms. An A-Z of Early Medieval Britain
Alex Harvey, author and lecturer

Tue 9 Dec, 7.00pm—YPS Lecture
Engineering the James Webb Space Telescope
Professor Emeritus Andy Marvin, University of York

2026

Tue 13 Jan, 2.30pm—YPS Lecture
Gems of Salvation or Stones of Damnation: Could Whitby's Jet Rewrite the Story of Colonial America?
Sarah Steele, University of Durham & Ebor Jetworks, Whitby

Mon 19 Jan, 6.30pm—Zoom presentation
Wills by Crombie Wilkinson *See page 4*

Wed 21 Jan, 7.30pm—Café Sci
A repeat of our December Café on Zoom
Little Kingdoms. An A-Z of Early Medieval Britain
Alex Harvey, author and lecturer

Tue 27 Jan, 7.00pm—YPS Lecture
Perfectionism in Sport (title to be confirmed)
Professor Andy Hill, University of York St John

Tue 10 Feb, 7.00pm—YPS Lecture
Brain Surgery (title to be confirmed)
Dr Ryan K Matthews, University of Leeds

Tue 24 Feb, 7.00pm—YPS Lecture
To be confirmed

Tue 10 Mar, 2.30pm—YPS Lecture
These Isles: a People's History of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales
Brian Groom, author
With book launch and signing

Tue 24 Mar, 7.00pm—YPS Lecture
Title to be confirmed
Dr Paul Flintoff, York Archaeology
Joint lecture with Friends of York Archaeology

Tue 14 Apr, 7.00pm—YPS Lecture
To be confirmed

Tue 28 Apr, 7.00pm—YPS Lecture
Challenges and Opportunities for conserving Historic Parks and Gardens in the 21st century
John Watkins, Chair of Trustees, The Gardens Trust
Joint lecture with Yorkshire Gardens Trust

Tue 12 May, 2.30pm—YPS Lecture
The Causes of Mass Extinction
Professor Paul Wignall, University of Leeds
A lecture for Yorkshire Geology Month

Thur 14 to Mon 18 May 2026
Tour to Kent *See flyer enclosed*

Lodge Opening Times

Please see page 11

Frances will be on holiday during weeks beginning 22nd and 29th December.

SAFEGUARDING

The Yorkshire Philosophical Society (YPS) takes seriously its obligations and responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of any child, young person or vulnerable adult who attends our events.
Unless otherwise stated, all our events are open to members and non-members. We welcome children provided that they are accompanied by a responsible adult.
The Safeguarding Policy is displayed at the Lodge. The Safeguarding Officer is Mr David Harbourne, Trustee, (chair@ypsyork.org) to whom all safeguarding concerns should be addressed.

PRIVACY

The Yorkshire Philosophical Society (YPS) holds members' names and addresses and, where supplied, telephone numbers and email addresses. This personal information is used for sending out details of our activities. The information remains confidential and is retained within the Society. Members may have access to their personal information on request by contacting the Clerk at info@ypsyork.org