



YORKSHIRE VERNACULAR BUILDINGS STUDY GROUP

www.yvbsg.org.uk

Newsheet No 44

April 2006

YVBSG Events For Your Diary

Richmond Review Day

Saturday 29 April 2006

In the morning there will be a review of the buildings recorded in June 2005, followed in the afternoon by an opportunity to view the exteriors during a walk around the town. The meeting will start at 10.30am at the Wenham Study Centre, Richmondshire Museum, Ryders Wynd, Richmond (the same venue as the meeting in June 2005). Everybody welcome, even if you didn't attend the June meeting. Please make your own arrangements for lunch – there are cafes and pubs in the town.

Annual Recording Conference in Swaledale

Friday 12 to Sunday 14 May 2006

The YVBSG has worked extensively in Upper Swaledale and Arkengarthdale. This conference, organised by Don McLellan, seeks to progress our understanding of Swaledale buildings still further. A booking form was circulated in March.

Committee meetings

The Committee is holding a 'virtual' meeting (conducted by email) from mid-April to the end of May 2006. Suggestions from members for future events would be particularly welcome during this period – please contact David Crook if you have any ideas.

The next full committee meeting will be held on Sunday 12 November 2006. If you'd like to raise any matter please contact David Crook.

Auction extended

No bids were received for the copy of *Vernacular Buildings in North Yorkshire and Cleveland* by Harrison & Hutton before the last deadline, so we have extended the deadline to Friday 12 May 2006. Please send bids as detailed in the last newsheet to David Crook.

Next Newsheet

Many thanks indeed to everybody who contributed to this newsheet. Please send items for the August newsheet to the editor by 31 July 2006.

Visit to Norland, near Halifax

Saturday 10 June 2006

Norland is a hilltop settlement south-west of Halifax and close to Sowerby Bridge. Unlike Heptonstall, which we visited a few years ago, there is no extensive village centre. However, there are several interesting homesteads both in Norland Town and on the surrounding hillsides. There are also remains of extensive quarrying, whilst farming and the domestic textile industry has left its mark on the buildings.

We plan to meet around 10.30am for a two-hour walk looking at some buildings and the landscape, led by David Cant. It is hoped to arrange refreshments before we start. There will be an hour's pause for lunch – there's a good pub serving food – then a shorter walk with visits to vernacular buildings.

Numbers will be limited to 25 on a first-come, first-served basis. Write to David Cant, 3 Middle Hathershelf, Luddendenfoot, Halifax, HX2 6JQ enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for further details, or email davidcant@hotmail.com.

Visit to Slaidburn and district

Saturday 8 July 2006

A full-day visit to the Slaidburn area, organised by Kevin Illingworth. We will see buildings with attractive features such as jettied porches, carved drip mould stops, ogee-headed windows, and a variety of handsome doorheads peculiar to Bowland and adjacent areas. The day will include:

- Slaidburn walkabout
- Visit to the small seventeenth century Heritage Centre/Tea Room, operated by the Heritage Trust for the North-West. Although closed at present for refurbishment, the Trust's director, Mr E M J Miller, has kindly offered to open it especially for us on the day. Coffee and other drinks will be available, as well as the attractive colourful Slaidburn Village Trail leaflet (50p).
- One-mile walk to Hammerton Hall, following the River Hodder.
- Visit to the Old Courtroom upstairs in the seventeenth century Hark to Bounty Inn. It is suggested that members have lunch here, or at least a drink!
- Visit to the seventeenth century Stephen Park Farmhouse and detached eighteenth century barn (now a conference venue operated by Knowsley Council for Voluntary Service), with its multitude of decorated and dated door lintels. On the way, a brief stop at Higher Stoneybank Farmhouse.

Meet at 10am in Slaidburn car park on the B6478 (east side) – 70p for 4 hours. If you'd like to come, please contact Kevin Illingworth on 01422 844941 with your name and telephone number, as numbers will be restricted to 20.



more YVBSG events on next page ...

YVBSG Events For Your Diary (continued)

Excursion to Danby-in-Cleveland

Sunday 17 September 2006

The manor and forest of Danby lay at the heart of a great medieval estate with a castle, three deer-parks, a huge block of demesne pastures, extensive iron forges and well over one hundred small tenant farms. Some of the farms lay in small hamlets but most were scattered around the sides of the valleys. In the mid-seventeenth century the manor was sold off, mostly to the sitting tenants. In addition new small farms were created over parts of the old demesnes. Before long the freeholders began rebuilding their farmhouses and cottages, many of which have survived to the present day. During the agricultural boom of the Napoleonic War period (circa 1790-1815) several hundred new cottages were built, mostly on strips of common waste. We shall see numerous examples of buildings of both periods, viewed in the wider context of landscape and social history.

This will be an active day, led by Barry Harrison, involving walking between scattered buildings and hamlets. Assemble in the car park of the North York Moors National Park Centre, Danby Lodge (grid reference NZ 717084) at 10.15am. Finish about 4.45pm.

Booking is not required – just turn up on the day. Further details of the route to be taken on the day will appear in the next Newsheet.

Wakefield Archives and Sites & Monuments Record

Friday 20 October 2006

A visit to Wakefield Archives and the Sites and Monuments Record, including the Registry of Deeds. Full details in the next Newsheet.

Annual Day School 2007

Saturday 10 March 2007

Next year's day school, to be held again at Leeds Metropolitan University Headingley Campus, will focus on the topic of Vernacular Buildings on Yorkshire's Fringes. If you have any suggestions for speakers at this event, or are interested in giving a presentation yourself, please contact David Cook.

Young Archaeologist of the Year Award 2006

The challenge for the Young Archaeologist of the Year Award 2006 is to tell the story of a local building using archaeological techniques to explore and record it. The building could be an old house, a shop, a school, a church, a temple, a mosque, a synagogue, a football stadium, a factory, a mill, a castle – the choice is endless! The competition is open to all young people, either individuals or in organised groups, aged 8 to 16 living in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man. Various archaeologically-themed prizes are on offer. Full details are available from YAYA 2006, Young Archaeologists' Club, St Mary's House, 66 Bootham, York YO30 7BZ, telephone 01904 671417, or see the Young Archaeologists' Club website at www.britarch.ac.uk/yac/. Closing date: 31 August 2006.

Vernacular Architecture Journal

Maney Publishing have recently taken over the publishing of *Vernacular Architecture*, the journal of the Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG). A leaflet is enclosed for anyone interested in subscribing to the journal. Alternatively, you may wish to consider joining the VAG: membership costs £20 per year and contact details are given in the leaflet.

Askrigg Hall

Can anyone in the YVBSG provide information about the demolished Askrigg Hall, illustrated in Lois Ambler, *The Old Halls and Manor Houses in Yorkshire*, pl CVI? Anything about the family who built it or further details of the building would be welcome.

J T Smith, 6 The Limes, St Albans AL1 4AT

Some recent publications

Understanding Historic Buildings: Principles of Good Recording Practice. This new English Heritage guidance document, published spring 2006, aims to consolidate and enhance standards of building recording throughout the historic environment sector, and is directed at everyone involved in making, commissioning, specifying or using historic building records. It incorporates a common set of standards for the presentation and archiving of written, graphic and photographic information, and includes the drawing conventions which the YVBSG recommends that members should follow, as well as some stunning sample drawings. For copies of the booklet (free of charge), please contact English Heritage, Customer Services Department, PO Box 569, Swindon SN2 2YP, telephone 0870 333 1181, email customers@english-heritage.org.uk.

Copies of the booklet will be provided to all those attending the YVBSG Swaledale recording conference in May.

Hall Houses by A Michael Mennim. Published October 2005 by Sessions of York Ebor Press, Huntington Road, York YO39HS, telephone 01904 659224, www.sessionsofyork.co.uk. ISBN 1850723281, £30 (+ £3 p&p). Traces the saga of the hall house, with chapters on historical, geographical and social contexts, chronological development, types of halls, accommodation, timber framing, structural details, the building process and conservation.



The City Walls and Castles of York: The Pictorial Evidence by B Wilson and F Mee. Published 2005 by York Archaeological Trust. ISBN 1874454361, £14.95. Outlines the historical background of York's walls, bars and posterns, the Old Baile and the castle.

Tracing the History of Your House: The Building - The People - The Past by Nick Barratt. Published February 2006 by The National Archives. ISBN 1903365902, £15.99. This fully revised and expanded guide explores the many kinds of information available to the amateur house detective, and offers expert guidance for navigating the information sources and records.

Vernacular Architecture Vol 36, 2005. Articles in the latest VAG journal include, amongst others, 'On the origins of crucks: an innocent notion' by Nick Hill; 'An early vernacular hammer-beam structure: Imberhorne Farm Cottages, East Grinstead, West Sussex' by J Clarke; 'Ritual marks and graffiti: curiosities or meaningful symbols?' by Bob Meeson; 'The late-Medieval remodelling of early roofs' by Edward Roberts; 'Some carpenters' marks in arabic numerals' by Arnold Pacey, as well as tree-ring dates and book reviews. If you'd like to borrow the YVBSG's copy, please contact Jacky Quarmby.

The IBRA Bee Boles Register online

Until the introduction of modern hives in the late nineteenth century, beekeepers in Britain and Ireland kept their bees in traditional hives (skeps) made from wicker and, later, coiled-straw. Before sugar was introduced, the honey was much valued as a sweetener and was also used to make mead; the beeswax was very important for making candles for the church.

Most skeps of bees were kept in the open, but some beekeepers built special structures to protect the skeps from the weather. The commonest type of structure surviving in the UK is a wall containing a row of recesses (bee boles), but other types have also been recorded: alcoves, bee shelters, bee houses and winter storage buildings. The International Bee Research Association Register, which was started in 1952, is now a large and valuable collection of records and photographs of these structures in many parts of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The IBRA Bee Boles Register database, which contains 1370 records and over 1100 images, can now be accessed online (free) at www.ibra.org.uk/beeboles. Searching is easy, and selected records and images can be viewed. In addition, a list of relevant publications is provided. The site will be of special value to local historians



*Row of bee boles, Lovington, Somerset
(No. 0131; photo: H C Tilzey)*



*Skep in brick bee bole,
Quebec House, Westerham, Kent
(Register No. 0078; photo: J Walker)*

throughout Britain and Ireland who are interested in our beekeeping heritage and in vernacular buildings. It could also be useful for school or college projects.

Penelope Walker, the voluntary curator of the Register for IBRA, has organized the conversion of the paper record forms, photographic prints and transparencies into this online database. Its main purposes are to make the information and images easily accessible to anyone interested, and to encourage conservation of the structures as well as further recording. New records are welcome, and the database will be updated regularly. For contact details, see the website, or telephone 029 2037 2409 (IBRA).

Financial contributions towards the cost of the project were received from Awards for All* (Guildford), CADW (Cardiff), Historic Scotland (Edinburgh) and the Eva Crane Trust.

* to the English Bee Boles Society.

Struggling with a drawing?

Several incidents have occurred over the years when members measuring up buildings and finding that their drawings don't work out, have thrown the measurements away. When somebody working with me did this a few years ago, it cost me £5 in bus fares and a wasted day, going back to the house and taking dimensions again! On other occasions, the consequences have been more serious, for example, when the building has been altered and vital evidence of its original state was lost with the abandoned measurements.

It is worth mentioning, then, that the correct procedure when drawings don't work out is, firstly, to consult the other people you were working with, one of whom may have noted details that will help you finish the drawing. Secondly, if the measurements still don't work and you cannot revisit the site, the dimensions should be noted in figures marked on a rough drawing and included in the report like that.

There is no shame in finding that a drawing doesn't work out – it happens to all of us. An example is a report on Fenay Hall, Almondbury, near Huddersfield, held by the National Monuments Record. It was compiled by a very senior and experienced staff member of English Heritage. The ground plan is presented as a rough drawing with dimensions in figures because a scale drawing could not be completed, perhaps because one dimension was missing, or because diagonal measurements were not taken in an odd-shaped room. The incomplete record is still very valuable.

For a fieldworker to throw measurements away because a drawing won't come out is rather like an accountant throwing cash away because his books won't balance.

Arnold Pacey

The Group wholeheartedly endorses Arnold's suggestions – if you can't finish a drawing, please don't discard your valuable measurements, no matter how rough they may be!

New Roof For Spout House

The North York Moors National Park Authority reported in January that the historic Spout House in Bilsdale would soon have a brand new thatched roof – thanks to the Authority and the hard work of local thatchers William Tegetmeier and Jonathan Botterell.

Spout House is one of the finest examples of a sixteenth century cruck-framed cottage in Yorkshire – having remained largely unaltered for over 200 years. The building was last re-thatched in

1992 and it is hoped that the new roof will help keep the building dry for another 15-20 years. Traditional techniques were used that are in keeping with the building's historic origins with strips of straw being held in place with simple hazel staples. 4.5 tons of straw were used to complete the project and a traditional variety has been specially selected for the project. Unlike modern varieties, which are shorter, 'longstraw' is an ideal length for roofing old

buildings and enables water to run freely down the entire length of each individual strand and onto the ground. The only concession to modern techniques is a mesh covering over the thatch that will prolong its life by protecting against damage by birds.

Spout House is located 8 miles north of Helmsley on the B1257. It is cared for by the National Park Authority and is open to the public from Easter to 31 October daily, 10am to 4pm, except Thursdays.

Other events of possible interest ...

Some of these events are publicised a long time in advance, so it's worth checking that they are still running before you go!

The Historic Environment of the Yorkshire Dales

Saturday 22 April 2006

A dayschool organised by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority in association with the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 10am-4.30pm at Grassington Town Hall, Grassington. The Yorkshire Dales have some of the best preserved and extensive historic landscapes in the country. Speakers will discuss some of the results of recent archaeological and historical survey and research. For details contact the National Park Centre, Hebden Road, Grassington, Skipton BD23 5LB, telephone 01756 752774, email herinfo@yorkshiredales.org.uk. Cost £10/£7.50 (does not include lunch).

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings: reception

Saturday 22 April 2006

A reception at the King's Manor, York, for SPAB regional members, to increase awareness of the Society's ongoing campaign for the sympathetic conservation and repair of the built environment. A full programme of visits, talks and demonstrations are planned for the day, including visits to the studios of The York Glaziers Trust, the fifteenth century Masons' Loft and the Minster's stoneyard. For the more adventurous a closer inspection of the repairs to the Minster's Great East Window will be possible via the scaffolding lift. For details contact Ray Wilson, email r.wilson@padside-hall.co.uk, web www.spab.org.uk.

House Detectives Day

Saturday 6 May 2006

10am-3pm in Heckington, Lincolnshire. Introduction to techniques for tracing the history of your house. Details from Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, The Old School, Cameron Street, Heckington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 9RW, telephone 01529 461499.

Medieval Towns in the North West

Saturday 10 June 2006

Study day at the Centre for North West Regional Studies. Details from CNWRS, Fylde College, University of Lancaster, Bailrigg, Lancaster LA1 4YF, telephone 01524 593770.

Medieval Wood Carving – Work of Ripon Carvers

Monday 19 June 2006

Talk by Maurice Taylor at 8pm at Fremington Sunday School. £3, all proceeds to the upkeep of St Andrew's Church, Grinton. For details, telephone Jeremy Hutchinson on 01748 886644, website www.swaleview.me.uk.

National Archaeology Week

Saturday 15 to Sunday 23 July 2006

For information contact the Marketing & Events Officer, Council for British Archaeology, St Mary's House, 66 Bootham, York, telephone 01904 671417, web www.britarch.ac.uk/naw.

Dendrochronology Working Group update

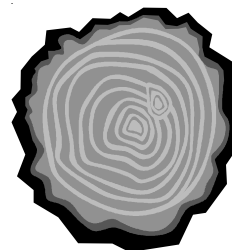
As reported in the December Newsheet, the YVBSG has set up a working group to look into the possibility of instigating more dendrochronology in the county.

Responding to an invitation from the owner, three available members of the working group have twice visited St Agnes's Lodge, Ripon, in order to measure and assess the complex early roof-structures above this otherwise late 17th century brick house. The next step, which is in hand, is to invite Cathy Groves of Sheffield University's Dendrochronology Laboratory to assess the suitability of the timbers for tree-ring dating. We hope this can be arranged within the next few weeks.

We have also received notice of several cruck buildings in the North York Moors area which might be available for dendro-dating. We have contacted the North York Moors National Park Archaeology Committee, who have expressed an interest in the subject and who might be willing to provide some support. The matter will be brought before the National Park's committee at their next meeting on 5 May.

It is hoped to convene a full meeting of the Dendro Working Group during the Reeth recording conference in May.

Barry Harrison



Learning about ...

A number of spring and summer courses were mentioned in the December Newsheet. Here are a few more:

Looking at Buildings

Tutor: Alan Petford. 4 Thursdays from 27 April 2006, 10.30am-2.30pm at Swarthmore Educational Centre, 3/7 Woodhouse Square, Leeds. Enquiries: Enid Wilson (WEA), 38 Cookridge Drive, Leeds LS16 7HW. Tel: 0113 267 1274.

Medieval Artists and Craftsmen

Tutor: Brian Sprakes. 10 Thursdays from 27 April 2006, 1-3pm at St Oswalds Parish Church, 2 Bannerdale Road, Sheffield. Enquiries: June Fisher (WEA), 29 Seabrook Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S2 2RZ. Tel: 0114 2724983.

Looking at Vernacular Buildings

Tutor: Alan Petford. 7 Mondays from 8 May 2006, 10.15-12.15 at Hope Chapel, Cheetham Street, Hebden Bridge. Enquiries: Jo Higgins (WEA), 89 Elphaborough Close, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, HX7 5JX Tel: 01422 882315.

How Old is that House?

Tutor: Alan Petford. This course will look at the development of houses in the Halifax area, paying particular attention to datable features. 10 Mondays from 15 May 2006, 2-4pm at Halifax Central Library, Northgate, Halifax. Enquiries: Margaret Francis (WEA), 38 Cherry Court, Crossley Gardens, HALIFAX, West Yorkshire, HX1 5NP Tel: 01422 368247

Country Houses of Lancashire

Tutor: John Champness. Includes visits to Astley Hall, Gawthorpe Hall, Heaton Hall, Leighton Hall and Lytham Hall, looking at for whom they were built and why; how they were paid for, the craftsmen who designed them and the families who lived in them. Monday 24 to Friday 28 July 2006. Details from Summer Programme, Department of Continuing Education, Ash House, Lancaster University, Lancaster LA1 4YT. Tel: 01524 592623/4.

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