



YORKSHIRE VERNACULAR BUILDINGS STUDY GROUP

www.yvbsg.org.uk

Newsheet No 57

August 2009

YVBSG Events For Your Diary

Conference Review Day in Carlton-in-Coverdale

Sunday 27 September 2009

A meeting to draw together and review the information gathered during this year's recording conference. The morning session will comprise presentations on the buildings recorded on 16 May 2009, to be held in Carlton Village Hall starting at 10am.



Optional lunch will be held from 1pm in The Foresters Arms in the village – please see the enclosed sheet for menu options and prices. Alternatively, the village hall will be open over lunch time for those who bring a packed lunch.

In the afternoon there will be a walk around the village led by Isobel Jenkins. Apologies to all who attended the May conference that we did not manage to fit in a walkabout in Carlton for everyone on the Sunday afternoon, and we hope this will provide some form of redress.

If you would like to come, please contact David Cook (contact details on the back-page) before Friday 18 September, and let him know also if you are going to take lunch in the Foresters Arms (this latter information is essential as dining places in the pub are limited) along with your menu choices and cheque payable to YVBSG.

Training Day at Long Preston

Saturday 17 October 2009

The Long Preston History Project group is doing research into village history for publication, but surprisingly no buildings have been recorded in this interesting settlement. The vernacular buildings training day, organised by members of the YVBSG and hosted by the Project, will follow the lines of the successful event for the East Keswick Local History Group. It will give practical recording experience and explain how buildings reveal much about centuries of social and economic changes and give insights that documents do not. Details are not yet finalised but if you are interested in attending please contact Alison Armstrong, telephone 01535 633592, email alisoncarmstrong@yahoo.co.uk.

Buildings and the Building Process in Guisborough before the Industrial Age

Sunday 18 October 2009

Leaders: Barry Harrison, Jacky Quarumby and Joyce Williams. For some years a small group of YVBSG members have been researching the history and development of domestic and other buildings in this Cleveland town through a wide range of sources, notably wills, inventories, maps and deeds. Guisborough is, for the most part, a planned town, laid out in the middle ages by the great Augustinian Priory (founded circa 1119). All subsequent development of the town took place within the original plots until the advent of the railway and ironstone-mining in the 1850s. We have now reached the position where we can trace the history of most of these plots and of the buildings located on them, between the mid-18th and mid-19th centuries (and in some cases much earlier). Our concern is not just with the buildings themselves but with when, by whom and for what purposes they were constructed. This is a rather unusual but, we believe, a valuable approach to urban vernacular architecture, as we hope to demonstrate to members during this visit. The visit will take in all the historic streets of the town – Westgate (the present high street), Market Place, Church Street, Belmangate and Northgate – looking at examples of dwellings and outbuildings owned or occupied by merchants, tradesmen and craftsmen, professional men, publicans and labourers, both on the main streets and in the garths behind them. The programme for the day is expected to be as follows:

- Assemble by the old Town Hall in the Market Place (south side) at 10.30am. Free parking on Sundays along Westgate or in car parks nearby.
- 10.30am–1.00pm. Selected buildings on Market Place and Westgate and in the garths behind them, from east to west. Returning along the side of Chapel (formerly Bakehouse) Beck.
- 1.00pm–2.15pm. Lunch Break. Lunches available at several nearby pubs and cafes. Sandwiches etc available at Morrisons (entrance from Westgate) and Sainsburys (8-minute walk).
- 2.15pm–4.45pm. Selected buildings at the east end of the town: Church Street, Northgate and Belmangate.

If you would like to come, please telephone (01287 633182) or send email (barryguisbro@hotmail.co.uk) to Barry Harrison by Thursday 1 October (Barry will be away from time to time, so if you telephone please leave a message). Please indicate if you would like travel instructions to Guisborough and the meeting point.

Annual Day School and AGM

Saturday 13 March 2010

Next year's day school will focus on the topic of vernacular buildings of market towns. Details in the next Newsheet.

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!

Heritage Open Days

10 to 13 September 2009

Annual event when buildings of every age, style and function throw open their doors. This year's highlights include:

- Howdenshire and Marshlands Historic Buildings. Exhibition based in the Shire Hall, Howden, and extending to Bishops' Manor House and Howden Minster. Saturday 10am to 5pm, guided walk at 2pm.
- Whiston Barn, Chaff Lane, Whiston, Rotherham. Grade II* listed barn open Sunday 10am to 4pm.

Look out for local publicity, or contact English Heritage on 0844 335 1884, or see the full online list of events at www.heritageopendays.org.uk.

Traditional Farmhouses in and around the Forest of Bowland

Monday 5 October 2009

An illustrated talk by Kevin Illingworth to Clitheroe Civic Society at Brookside School, Bright Street, Clitheroe at 7.30pm. Visitors £2. Enquiries: John Goodman (secretary) on 01200 443571.

'Clogs and Shawls': The History and Image of the Northern Mill Town

Saturday 10 October 2009

Day school examining the development of the mill town and its social and cultural activities. Fee £17.50. Booking forms available from University of Bradford, telephone 01274 233217, www.brad.ac.uk/events/dayschools.

York Archaeology and History Fair

Saturday 10 October 2009

Annual fair at The Guildhall, York, 10am to 4pm, with local societies and specialist booksellers. Free admission. Enquiries: Jon Kenny, telephone 01904 663020 or email jkenny@yorkat.co.uk.

Beverley Local History Bookfair

Saturday 17 October 2009

Annual fair in Beverley Minster from 10am to 4pm, admission free. Enquiries: Pamela Martin, telephone 01482 392795.

The Dual Economy of Farming and Industry in the Yorkshire Pennines

Tuesday 20 October 2009

Talk by Professor Bernard Jennings to the Halifax Antiquarian Society, 7.30pm at Halifax Library. Website www.halifaxhistory.org.uk.

Houses of Mold and District

Monday 26 October 2009

Talk by David Rowe to Chester Society for Landscape History at the Grosvenor Museum, 27 Grosvenor Street, Chester CH1 2DD at 7.30pm. Visitors £2. Web www.chesterlandscapehistory.org.uk.

Dunham Massey Farmsteads

Tuesday 27 October 2009

Talk by Dr Mike Nevell to Altrincham History Society at Methodist Church, Springfield Road, Altrincham at 7.30pm. Visitors £2. Enquiries: David Miller (secretary) on 0161 926 8334.

Prehistory of the Yorkshire Dales

Saturday 31 October 2009

The PLACE autumn conference 2009 in Grassington, organised jointly with the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Yorkshire Dales Landscape Research Trust. Cost £10 per head. Details from Dr Margaret Atherden, telephone 01904 766291, or see www.place.uk.com.

Hall End, Halifax

Tuesday 3 November 2009

Talk by Peter and Andrew Robinson to Halifax Antiquarian Society, 7.30pm at Halifax Library. Website www.halifaxhistory.org.uk.

Architecture of the North West

Saturday 7 November 2009

Dayschool at Lancaster University with talks including *Revising North Lancashire – Pevsner revisited* by Claire Hartwell; *Five New Pevsners for the North-West* by Matthew Hyde; *Building on Tradition* by Andrew Lowe; *Architecture and some uses of Tradition: Projects* by Francis Roberts Architects by Dominic Roberts. Fee £18. For details contact Christine Wilkinson, Centre for North-West Regional Studies, telephone 01524 593770, www.lancs.ac.uk/users/cnwrs.

New Research into the History of Yorkshire

Saturday 7 November 2009

A local history day sponsored by the British Association for Local History and the University of Hull, at The Royal Hotel, Ferensway, Hull, 9.30am-5.30pm. Papers cover all parts of Yorkshire. There will also be displays from history societies. Full programme on website www.sp12.hull.ac.uk/November.htm, or email Helen Good at mail@helengood.com, or write to BALH (HC), 147 Oyster Quay, Portway, Cosham, PO6 4TQ. Fee £15.

Old Inns of the Yorkshire Dales

Tuesday 10 November 2009

Talk by David Johnson to North Craven Heritage Trust in Langcliffe Village Institute at 7.30pm. Visitors £2. Web www.northcravenheritage.org.uk.

Lancashire County Archaeology Service Annual Day School

Saturday 28 November 2009

Held in conjunction with the University of Central Lancashire, Preston. Price around £8. Speakers include Garry Miller – *Houses of the Douglas Valley* and Richard Newman – *Workers' Housing*. Full details from Lancashire County Archaeological Service, email archaeology@lancashire.gov.uk, telephone 01772 533404.

Timber Framing in the East Riding – update

The response from the Heritage Lottery Fund to our pre-application indicated two areas that we would need to address for a formal application to be successful. One was to increase local group involvement in the project, and the other was to provide match funding.

Sadly, meeting these requirements represents extra work which I think we will find hard to complete in the short and medium terms with the resources we have to hand. Personally, I find it difficult to divert energies away from recording work and organising YVBSG events to other activities such as negotiations, fund raising and filling in forms, even though the end result would be of great benefit to the study and understanding of these buildings.

On a positive note, I am hopeful that some solution or compromise can be reached that will lead to a successful application. In anticipation of this, I propose that we hold the 2010 Annual Recording Conference in the East Riding to record some of the buildings on the dendrochronology list already compiled by the project team.

David Cook

Next Newsheet

Many thanks indeed to everybody who contributed to this newsheet. The next edition will be in November – please send items to the editor by 31 October 2009.

Next committee meeting

The next committee meeting will be held on Sunday 4 October 2009. If you'd like to raise any matters or suggest any events please contact David Crook.

Recent YVBSG events

Carlton-in-Coverdale

We thank all those involved in organising the annual conference in May, especially Isobel Jenkins, Sonia Wilkinson and David Cook, and we look forward to hearing about the buildings recorded at the Review Day!

Observing Crucks in North-East Yorkshire

Our thanks go to Barry Harrison for arranging a most enjoyable day on Sunday 21 June 2009 looking at crucks in-situ. The day began with an examination of the re-erected cruck buildings in the Ryedale Folk Museum at Hutton-le-Hole, noting the cruck feet protruding from the base of the walls at Stang End which suggested errors in measurement during their re-erection! We then moved on to investigate crucks in Roxby Farm Cottage in Thornton-le-Dale and Cruck Cottage in Cropton, finishing the day with a walking tour to see the thatched cruck-framed houses of the village of Pockley.



Pockley



Low Hall

Low Hall and Roundabout Farm

On Saturday 27 June 2009, over twenty members visited Low Hall, Dacre, and Roundabout Farm, Thornthwaite-with-Padside. Much discussion took place regarding former rooflines, chamfer stops, doorways and many other features, and the two very different gardens were also explored. If you'd like to spend more time in the area, Low Hall offers bed and breakfast from £50 per person per night (telephone 01423 780230 or see the website www.wolseylodges.com/lodges/counties/Yorkshire.htm which also features other enticing places to stay in Yorkshire). Another interesting building seen on the day – Gate Eel at Dacre Banks – offers B&B at £30 per person per night (see their website at www.gateelfarmhouse.com). Thanks go to Kevin Illingworth for organising an excellent day.

Vernacular Buildings in the Barnsley district

We are grateful to Malcolm Birdsall and Dr David Mercer for arranging a successful venture into South Yorkshire on Saturday 11 July 2009. After a short visit to the delightful Victoria Jubilee Museum in Cawthorne, the group visited a number of houses and farm buildings containing intriguing timber work. Some noteworthy carpenters' marks were observed on timbers at the Brampton Hall pub at Brampton Bierlow (www.bramptonhall.com) and we were duly impressed by the size of Gunthwaite Barn. We hope to explore more of this area in the future.



Gunthwaite Barn

Courses

A selection of courses on offer during the coming autumn term ...

The Geology of Some Yorkshire Wold Churches

Starting on 8 September 2009, this day-time course includes two classroom sessions and field trips to Weaverthorpe, Wharram Percy and Bishop Wilton.

Tutor: Richard Myerscough. Fee £66. Pre-enrolment essential: contact WEA Pickering Branch Secretary (01751 476118).

The Parkers of Browsholme Hall – 500 years of local history

Since 1507 the Parker family have lived at Browsholme Hall, now in Lancashire but formerly in the West Riding, and still inhabited by descendants of the original owners. You will meet the current owner who will show you round his home.

Tutor: Linda Sawley. Tuesday 15 September 2009, 10am-4pm. Price £52. Enquiries: Alston Hall, Alston Lane, Longridge, Preston PR3 3BP, telephone 01772 784661, web www.alstonhall.com.

Agriculture and History in the Pennine Landscape

Come and join this lively research group which is exploring agriculture and history in the old parish of Halifax.

Tutors: Ian Bailey, David Cant, Alan Petford and Nigel Smith. Mondays 7.30-9.30pm for ten weeks starting 28 September 2009 at Hope Baptist Chapel, Hebden Bridge. Fee: £60. Enquiries: Nigel Smith, telephone 01422 842847, email librarian@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk.

Discover the History of Your House

This course will teach you which documents hold the keys to the past, where to find them and how to use them.

Tutor: Katy Iliffe. Four Mondays from 28 September 2009, 7pm-9pm at Sedbergh Community Development Centre. Fee £23. Enquiries: 015396 21031, www.sedberghcdc.org.uk.

English Domestic Vernacular Architecture

The story of the humble dwellings of the peasants, workers and middle classes through the ages. Includes field trips.

Tutor: Warwick Burton. 20 Tuesdays, 10am-noon, from 29 September 2009 at Community House, Harrogate. Fee £120. Enquiries: Paula Winchester, WEA, telephone 01423 506657.

Recent books

The Tacolneston Project: A Study of Vernacular Buildings in the South Norfolk Claylands, edited by A Longcroft, R Forrest, S Brown and M Brown. Journal of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group, Volume 4 (2009). A study which sheds new light on Norfolk's surviving vernacular buildings, focusing on over 40 timber-framed buildings around Tacolneston. To purchase a copy, send a cheque for £13 (includes p&p) payable to Norfolk Historic Buildings Group, to Mrs Karen Mackie, 44 Norwich Road, Tacolneston, Norfolk NR16 1BY.

The Medieval House: Living with Smoke

On the 4th of July, I attended a Day School at Lavenham, organised by the Suffolk Historic Buildings Group, on the subject of *The Medieval House: Living with Smoke*. The question of smoke dispersal, and indeed of house ventilation generally, seems to have received little detailed attention from students of vernacular architecture. Open halls with smoke-blackened roofs are of course familiar to us all, but little attention has been paid to how smoke was actually 'managed', whether for dispersion or (as we were later to learn) for conservation.

John Walker opened proceedings with a general review of the subject in which he pointed out that smoke was not just an evil to be got rid of, but a valuable commodity for the preservation of crops and many foodstuffs to the extent that it was sometimes deliberately 'tunnelled' into first-floor chambers. In Devon and Somerset low partitions allowed the smoke to pass through the whole roof and, in the case of longhouses, even over the cattle, while in North Germany, the great 'Saxon' aisled farmhouses had, as late as the eighteenth century, large fireplaces without chimneys! – the smoke was simply allowed to drift into the upper storey through loose floor-boards. He also showed how ventilation and smoke management were controlled not only by devices in the roof, but also by doors and window shutters.

In the next presentation, Leigh Alston dealt with one form of smoke dispersal in Suffolk: the 'smoke gablet', ie a triangular opening at the apex of the hipped gable of a thatched house. Such gablets are known in many parts of the country, including the Vale of York (writer's comment). They were controlled by shutters and protected by arched timber hoods standing on small wooden platforms. Neither shutter nor hood has usually survived, but evidence for them can be found by the intrepid recorder. Even in seventeenth century houses, with proper chimneys, gablets were sometimes retained for ventilation purposes.

John Walker returned to examine another device for smoke dispersal, the 'louvre'. These structures, set in the roofs above open halls or kitchens, are often identified by a couple of trimmers attached to the common rafters to provide a platform for the louvre above. The louvre, however, would have shutters around the sides which would have required control from below. This may explain the puzzling series of pegs often found on rafters and purlins. The speaker put forward a strong case for the use of such pegs to secure levers and/or ropes by which to adjust the shutters of the louvre, perhaps with the assistance of high ladders. Again, it was stressed that ventilation for fresh air was probably just as important as smoke dispersion. This might explain why large open kitchens, with wall-fireplaces, often retained a louvre in the roof (writer's comment).

Leigh Alston returned to talk about early timber and brick chimneys. He demonstrated how ordinary houses in Suffolk often had kitchens (sometimes detached originally) with narrow smoke-bays at the fireplace end. The smoke-bay is a narrow shaft, framed into the building and open only at ground-floor level, where the fire was set. The timber fire-hood, however, which is common in Yorkshire, is relatively rare in the Suffolk.

Philip Aitkens introduced us to a number of Suffolk houses with 'short-stacks'. These are timber chimneys (mostly of the smoke-bay type) in two-storeyed buildings, which stopped short of the roof apex. Thus smoke was restricted on the ground-floor but could emerge into the chambers above. In

one type, the chimney stopped short of the roof-ridge, rising as far as a collar linking the rafters. The smoke was, however, only allowed to pass into one or two of the upper chambers, the other chamber(s) being protected by partitions rising to the apex of the roof. Above all, smoke was not permitted into the chamber above the service-end, which was commonly used as cheese store in high Suffolk. Other examples showed stacks rising only as far as a tie-beam (which was therefore heavily smoke-blackened). Another example allowed smoke into the chamber above the hall and then removed it via an unglazed window set just above floor level (with smoke-blackened mullions!).

Finally, David Martin described smoke dispersal in East Sussex, by way of comparison with East Anglia. Here things were quite different. There were no gable-hoods and only a handful of louvres recorded in the county. Full-height partitions ran to the apex of the roof, leaving only the hall-roof sooted. By the late fifteenth century only one bay of the hall might be left open. Kitchens were heated by smoke-bays and timber fire-hoods were rare, perhaps because of the high cost of 'daubing' chimneys – an example from Battle Abbey (1498/99) showed a timber chimney taking thirteen days to daub!

This day school brought home to me the importance of looking very carefully at roofs, not just the main trusses but also the minor structural elements. It occurred to me that our Group has not paid much attention to the issue of smoke dispersion, perhaps because the evidence is usually lacking in our buildings. However, on the following weekend I attended the excellent set of visits organised by the Group in South Yorkshire. Two of the buildings visited had interesting structures in the roof: one above a kitchen at Brampton Hall, Brampton Bierlow, and another above the hall at Field Head Farm, Silkstone (see photos below). One suspects there may be other examples in Yorkshire, which have gone unnoticed, ignored or misinterpreted.

Barry Harrison



The timber structure in the roof at Brampton Hall



Roof timbers at Field Head Farm