

YORKSHIRE VERNACULAR BUILDINGS STUDY GROUP



Newsheet No 19

December 1998

YVBSG events

Traditional Buildings of Yorkshire

Saturday 6 March 1999

Day school at King's Manor, York: a review of the styles found in different parts of the county. Booking form enclosed; further copies available from David Cant. Book early as numbers are limited to 50!

Committee Meeting

Sunday 28 March 1999

If you have any items you would like to add to the agenda, please contact David Cook.

Annual Recording Conference and AGM

Friday 14 - Sunday 16 May 1999

To be held in Holderness. Details to be announced.

Exploratory Day in South Yorkshire

Saturday 19 June 1999

A reconnoitre of an area not yet investigated by the group. Details to be announced. If you have contacts in the area, or suggestions for potential places to visit, please get in touch with David Cant.

Conference Review Day

Sunday 19 September 1999

Year 2000 Conference

In the Haworth area, probably concentrating on smaller 18th and 19th century vernacular buildings.

Pen to paper

As ever, you are encouraged to send in items for the annual journal, *Yorkshire Buildings*. There's still time to contribute to the 1999 edition - to the editor as soon as possible, please. All input welcome!



Happy new year!

Time to renew your membership again: you'll find a renewal form enclosed.

Next newsheet

Please send any items for the April Newsheet to the editor by the end of March 1999.

Other events of possible interest

RCHME Exhibition; "More than meets the eye"

14 December 1998 - 28 February 1999

Exhibition at Hull and East Riding Museum, 36 High Street, Old Town, Hull. Includes "striking images of northern England from the air". Tel 01482 613902.

William Marshall and Farm Buildings of the North York Moors

Wednesday 3 February 1999

Talk by Ian Pattison to the Forest of Galtres Society at 7.30pm in the Parish Church Rooms, Easingwold. £1 fee for guests.

Redundant Buildings in the Countryside

Thursday 25 February 1999

Seminar organised by the Yorkshire Wolds Heritage Trust, in Pocklington. Speakers include Jeremy Lake and Bob Hawkins (English Heritage), Robert Pigg (National Farmers Union), and the Countryside Commission. Cost approx £6, time approx 10am - 3pm. Details from Rod Mill, tel 01430 827366.

VAG Conference in Sussex

Tuesday 6 - Saturday 10 April 1999

If there are spare places affiliated societies can apply. Details available in February from David Cant.

Churches, Chapels and the Community in Yorkshire

Saturday 24 April 1999

Yorkshire Archaeological Society day event. Details from YAS, tel 0113 245 7910.

Agriculture and the Rural Landscape

Saturday 15 May 1999

Day school organised by PLACE at the University College of Ripon and York St John, York. Details available in spring; tel 01904 616753. Note: this clashes with YVBSG Annual Conference.

Landscape History Day School

Saturday 12 June 1999

A WEA day school in the Memorial Hall, Addingham. Speakers: Dr Oliver Rackham and Dr Angus Winchester. Field outings will include vernacular buildings. Details later.

Updating the archives with Don and Bill

About two years ago the group bought a computer database that Don installed on his machine. Like all good programs it did absolutely nothing until he had spent about five million hours getting things wrong; after that it started to do what it was told. It's time to pretend ...

Imagine a filing cabinet that is filled with files: on each file is the name of one of the houses that the group has recorded. Inside the folder there are one hundred and seventeen little envelopes and if you look you will see that each one has something different written on the outside. Written on one envelope in every file are the words *Fire window* and on a little piece of paper tucked away inside it says either *Yes* or *No*. Another envelope (again there is an identical one in every file) has the word *Bressummer* written on it: inside that one too is either a *Yes* or a *No*.

It is very easy for Don to say to the computer "Off you go, Bill," for he is old and he is a PC, "Scamper off and find all of the files that have a *Yes* in the *Bressummer* envelope." Like a good lad, off he goes and looks in every file, takes out the *Bressummer* envelope, looks inside and makes a decision. If the bit of paper inside says *Yes* then he gets the file out of the cabinet and puts it on a pile, but if it says *No* then he puts it all away again. He goes through the whole cabinet until everything has been checked in the same way. Then he goes trotting back (wagging his virtual tail) and says "OK Don, here are all of the files you wanted" and Don is dead chuffed: you bet he is!

One of the envelopes says *Front Wall Thickness* on the outside, but inside there isn't a *Yes* and there isn't a *No*: instead

it says *670 mm* (or something like that). With envelopes like this Don can say "Bill," for that is still the boy's name, "Off you pop and get me every one that has a number bigger than 600" and like a good kid that is exactly what Bill does. Inside each file there are the same one hundred and seventeen envelopes, some of them have *Ayes* or *Nays* inside whilst others say *Kingpost* or *Lobby Entry*.

Don spent about two years writing the names on the envelopes and sometimes he got it wrong: the one that stored the colour of the back door, for instance, was not a bit of use because it told him nothing about the development of the house. But some of them are great because they really do pick out all the houses with *Cavetto Mullions*, for example, or *Pantiles on the Roof*, or *Transverse Beams in the Forehouse*. Bill can even pick out the *Cross Passage houses that are built of Sandstone* but it's not just because he's a clever lad.

It's now reached the time when Don thinks he's taught Bill about as much as he can and it's your turn to help. If you are actively involved in recording houses, please drop a line to Don and tell him so. He will send you a form to photocopy. Do it every time you record a house; well, don't just photocopy it, fill it in and send it back. The form will tell Bill what to put in each of the

envelopes when he learns about the house you've just recorded. There's more to it than that, though, because Don isn't sure that he's got all the right words on the envelopes and when you fill in the form he'd be really happy if you wrote back saying something like "I wanted to teach old Bill about *fireplaces* but I couldn't: you need to alter the form." Actually, if you want to make him deliriously happy, write back and say "I wish Bill could tell me which houses have an *arched fireplace with scribed joggled voussiors*: it's not on the form and I think it should be!"

You can stop pretending now – this is heavy stuff (and yes, it is Don writing) and I need to know if I've got the most appropriate fields in the database: the ones that really will help to sort houses meaningfully. So, if you do put reports together get in touch and I will send you some forms. I would like you to send one back (filled in please) with each report that you complete; and please do let me know if there are things that I've overlooked or that shouldn't be there.

It is too soon to get excited though: right now there are less than a hundred and fifty reports out of our total of more than fifteen hundred actually entered up. That will be another way you can help ...

Don McLellan, Archivist



Thank you!

Thanks to all who helped prepare material for the PLACE Conference in October, and in particular to Tony Tolhurst for leading the tour around Heslington.

Thanks also to the organisers of the Snape Recording Day in November: Barry Harrison, David Cook, and the Snape Local History Group. Please send your drawings to team leaders in order that the reports can be completed promptly.

A new book

Lost Houses of the West Riding by Edward Waterson and Peter Meadows (£8.99). Photos and brief potted histories of over 100 houses, mostly not vernacular, but still interesting.

Historical atlas of North Yorkshire

The group hopes to contribute to the Historical Atlas of North Yorkshire which is to be compiled by PLACE (see Newsheet No 18). A working group, led by David Cook, is looking at the possibilities; if you have any ideas about topics for inclusion in the atlas, or if you would like to be involved on the working group, please contact David Cook *as soon as possible*.

Old orchards in the landscape

A PLACE member, Barry Potter, is carrying out a survey of old orchards. If you know of any such orchards comprising three or more fruit trees, please write to Barry at 29 Knapton Lane, York YO2 5PX, informing him of the location and any supporting evidence.

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