



YORKSHIRE VERNACULAR BUILDINGS STUDY GROUP

www.yvbsg.org.uk

Newsheet No 40

February 2005

YVBSG Events For Your Diary

Vernacular Buildings in the Landscape

Saturday 19 March 2005

The annual day school, followed by the AGM, to be held at Leeds Metropolitan University Beckett Park Campus. Booking forms were circulated with the December Newsheet. Places are still available so please don't forget to send in your booking form as soon as possible if you haven't already done so!

There will be some space for displaying books and leaflets, so if any members have publications of their own for sale, do bring some along if you wish.

Annual Recording Conference

Friday 13 to Sunday 15 May 2005

To be held in Uppertong (near Holmfirth) in West Yorkshire. A variety of buildings from different periods will be recorded. Booking form enclosed with this Newsheet. If anyone would like to take the opportunity to learn the skills of a team leader by 'shadowing' an experienced leader during the conference, please tick the appropriate box on the booking form.



Richmond Recording Day

Saturday 25 June 2005

A day on which we shall start to investigate the vernacular architecture of Richmond by recording five buildings in the historic centre. There is no booking form for this event, but if you'd like to take part, please contact David Crook by 31 May 2005 (contact details on back page). Please also let David know if you are willing to be a team leader for the day. It is hoped that a review day can be arranged in 2006 to consider the buildings recorded and to interpret the findings.

Observation Day in York

Sunday 4 September 2005

In response to suggestions received from members, we are planning a 'Members' Day' which is intended for those new to the study of vernacular buildings as well as those who might wish to brush up their expertise. The event will offer an opportunity to learn and practise the skill of observation, by exploring the features of a selection of stone, brick and timber buildings in York. Further details will be published in the next Newsheet.

Conference Review Day

Sunday 25 September 2005 (provisional)

A day to review the findings of the conference in Uppertong in May.

Committee meeting

The next full committee meeting will be held on Sunday 13 November 2005, although a 'virtual' meeting will be held in the summer to plan next year's events. If you'd like to raise any matter, or if you have any suggestions for future events, please contact David Crook.

Annual Day School 2006

March 2006

The committee is keen to encourage any members who would like to become more involved with the organisation of the Group's events. In particular, would anyone be interested in organising or helping to organise next year's day school? If you think you might be able to help, please contact David Cook for a chat. After running successful day schools for the last six years, David is more than happy to let someone else have a go!

We're also eager to hear of any suggestions for possible topics for day schools. One idea is that we could look at the fringes of Yorkshire and its neighbouring counties to consider how far the influences seen in our buildings spread into other regions, and to identify any contrasts. Again, if you have any suggestions for different topics, or are able to pursue the above idea, please have a word with David Cook.

Membership renewal

Thank you to all those members who renewed so promptly, despite the increase in membership fee this year! A reminder is enclosed for those who have not yet renewed - we hope you will re-join the Group soon.

Yorkshire Buildings

Are there any last-minute short offerings for *Yorkshire Buildings 2005*? If so, please contact the editor as soon as possible!

Next Newsheet

Many thanks indeed to everybody who contributed to this newsheet. Please send items for the June newsheet to the editor by 31 May.

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!

A Plague on that House: Recording one small house in Farnhill, 2000-2004

Monday 28 February 2005

In the November Newsheet we mentioned that Don McLellan would give a talk to the Upper Wharfedale Field Society in Grassington Town Hall at 7.30pm. The title then was somewhat vague; the more precise title is as above!

County Durham Archaeology Day

Saturday 5 March 2005

Durham County Council are holding their first Archaeology Day at County Hall, Durham. Includes a talk on vernacular buildings entitled 'A Clearing Mist - Recent Discoveries in Traditional Building in County Durham' by Martin Roberts of the North East Vernacular Architecture Group. Contact the Archaeology Section, telephone 0191 3834212, email archaeology@durham.gov.uk.

Great Elizabethan Houses of Yorkshire

Friday 11 March 2005

University of Bradford Friday Morning Lecture by George Sheeran, 10.30am to noon, £3 payable on the door. Details from School of Lifelong Education and Development, University of Bradford, telephone 01274 233217 or 233213, website www.brad.ac.uk/sled.

Sustaining Historic Urban Environments

Saturday 12 March 2005

The first major conference to be organised in West Yorkshire by PLACE, in collaboration with the University of Bradford. Talks include 'Changing cities: the evolution of old places into the future' by David Fraser, 'Bringing historic buildings back into productive use' by Marc Cole and 'Saltaire World Heritage Site: a future for the past' by Caroline Wilkinson. Fee £20. Booking is via the University of Bradford, contact details above.

Nidderdale Heritage Weekend

Friday 18 to Monday 21 March 2005

Discover how the monks of Fountains Abbey shaped the landscape of the Eastern Dales and learn to 'read' the landscape. Includes a visit with a National Trust expert to parts of the Abbey most visitors don't see, as well as a visit to the deserted medieval village and monastic grange complex at High Cayton. An evening visit to the Nidderdale Museum which contains artefacts from the lead mining industry, and an exploration of the remains of centuries of lead mining at Greenhow are also included in the programme. Price £160 per person. Accommodation not included. Leaders: Kevin Cale and Martin Roe. Further details from Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Bewerley Park Centre, Pateley Bridge, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 5JB, telephone 01423 711287 or 711509, website www.nidderdaleaonb.org.uk.

Historic Walk: Looking at Shibden Hall Estate

Monday 28 March 2005

Meet Michael Walton outside the front entrance of Shibden Hall, Halifax, at 2pm for this free guided walk of the grounds (included in usual admission price). Enquiries: 01422 352246.

Northern Housing

Saturday 16 April 2005

As promised in the November Newsheet, a booking form giving full details of this conference at Teesside University is enclosed. Enquiries: Robina Weeds, telephone 01642 384074, email r.weeds@tees.ac.uk.

Buildings Archaeology - Local Villages

Thursday 28 April 2005

Talk by Derek Gaunt to Boston Spa and District Community Archaeology Group at 7.30pm in Lab 11 at Boston Spa Comprehensive School, followed by a guided walk with the speaker on Sunday 1 May at 2pm to look at above-ground archaeology in Tockwith. Enquiries: Malcolm and Julie Barnes, telephone 01937 844115.

Yorkshire Geology Month

May/June 2005

A series of events in which geologists share their interest and enjoyment with the public. Events include *Building Stones of the Town Centre of Huddersfield*, a two-hour stroll around the town centre to look at polished rocks on shop and bank fronts on Monday 13 June led by Alison Quarterman (telephone 01484 608004). Free, booking not required - meet 7pm in seating area in Huddersfield Market Place (SE147167).

Full details of all events are on website www.horne28.freeserve.co.uk/ygm.htm or from Mike Horne, 28 Salisbury Street, Hull HU5 3HA, or email mike@horne28.freeserve.co.uk.

A thousand years of English architecture

Wednesday 11 May 2005

Meeting of the Bradford Historical and Antiquarian Society with Pat Clarke, in Room 1, 2nd floor, Bradford Central Library at 7.15pm. Visitors always welcome at the lectures; fee £1.50.

Central Halifax and its Piece Hall

Friday 17 June 2005

University of Bradford Friday Afternoon Walk with George Sheeran. £3, must be booked in advance. Contact University of Bradford, details as above.

Nunnington Hall: the Rise and Fall of a Jacobite House

Saturday 18 June 2005

University of Bradford day school with tutor George Sheeran. Contact University of Bradford, details as above.

Historic Harrogate

Friday 24 June 2005

University of Bradford Friday Afternoon Walk with Paul Jennings. £3, must be booked in advance. Contact University of Bradford, details as above.

Land Registry internet service

Land Register Online, HM Land Registry's first internet service for the general public, providing easy access to details of more than 19 million properties in England and Wales, was launched on 31 January 2005.

On visiting the Land Register website (www.landregisteronline.gov.uk), users enter the address details of the property that they wish to view, complete payment details and then download the documents at £2 each. Property price information is only available if a property was purchased or registered since April 2000. The service is aimed at house purchasers who can download the full title deed of a property, showing everything from the owner's name to the configuration of land boundaries. Of course, house researchers may also find it of use!

Another event of possible interest ...

Whitby: Exploring the Scottish Connections

The Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group is holding its annual spring conference not in Scotland this year as usual, but in Whitby, on Friday 22 to Monday 25 April 2005. The town of Whitby is today one of the most vibrant towns in North Yorkshire. Tourism has largely replaced the traditional industries of fishing and ship building, although there is still port traffic, as Whitby remains one of the most sheltered harbours on the North East coast.

Surrounded by twenty miles of moorland on its landward side, Whitby has always been dependant on the sea for its prosperity and trade. At the dissolution of the Monastery in 1539 the town's economy collapsed and it became an insignificant port. Its small port trade was largely carried on in Dutch and Scottish vessels, shipping salt from Preston pans, taking bark to the small ports on the Firth of Forth for treating sailcloth and also carrying 'crooked timber for boats knees'.

After 1608 when alum shale was discovered in the area and alum processing began, a shortage of local kelp led to a trade with Orkney from about 1720 to the mid nineteenth century when the industry died out.

Following 1745 a number of Highland families settled in the area, since this area had many sympathetic Catholic families.

So what are the Scottish connections?

It seems entirely likely that with trade in materials and the fact that Whitby's location meant that there was restricted land-based communications, there would be cross fertilisation of skills and traditions from trading partners.

The existence of timber panelling in a vast range of buildings from small cottages to merchants' houses is impressive. The few surviving examples of late medieval work are unquestionably English in appearance; the later eighteenth century work,



Robin Hood's Bay

however, is typical of good quality Scottish work of the same period. This is less true of panelling of a similar date in nearby Scarborough. The extensive use of ashlar masonry in Whitby is also more common than in other towns on the east coast. One building of c.1815 could easily have been plucked from Leith quayside!

We will examine the buildings of the east and west towns (including properties in Silver Street, Flowergate, Unitarian Chapel, St Ninian's Church, Spa Well House, 19 Grape Lane, Cook Museum, 2 Blackburns Yard, Borough Place, Clark's Yard) and the unique parish church of St Mary. A field trip to nearby Robin Hoods Bay, a densely packed village four miles south of Whitby, will reveal a very different character. There will be evening lectures by Dr Andrew White, author of *A History of Whitby*, and by Rosalin Barker on 'Whitby's Fishing Industry'. The conference ends on Monday with optional visits to Whitby Abbey and Visitor Centre, Sandsend and Staithes.

The conference will be based in the Saxonville Hotel although some accommodation may be in nearby guesthouses.

For further details, please contact Norma Smith, Monkswell House, Monkswell Road, Newburgh, Fife KY14 6AF, telephone 01337 841173, email nbsmithhs@yahoo.co.uk, website www.svbwg.org.uk.

Some recent publications

Sheffield by Ruth Harman and John Minnis. Pevsner City Guides, ISBN 0 300 10585, December 2004, £9.99. This detailed and comprehensive guide provides an unrivalled account of Sheffield's architecture from medieval to modern. Walks, exploring both city centre and suburbs, reveal not only the city's renowned industrial heritage and its handsome Victorian buildings, including the Town Hall, but also surprising survivals of the medieval town and the lesser-known architecture of Georgian Sheffield. Majestic surroundings provide the setting for memorable mansions and villas, home to the city's industrial magnates, and some of the most innovative public housing of post-war England, while the Peace Gardens, Millennium Galleries, Winter Garden and Persistence Works represent the city's twenty first century renaissance.

Licensed to Sell: The History and Heritage of the Public House by Geoff Brandwood, Andrew Davison and Michael Slaughter. February 2005, English Heritage Publications, ISBN 185074906X, £14.99. Describes how the long and interesting history of the pub, and changing attitudes towards it, are reflected in its design and planning, and how it was organised to serve and entertain the customer. It also deals with the often magnificent embellishment of pubs with ornamental glass, tilework and carved wood in the golden age of pub building around 1900. The book contains over 150 photographs of pub interiors as well as plans illustrating and explaining the development of the public house through the ages.

The Do's and Don'ts of Cottage Restoration: Erratum

Further to Barbara Hutton's recommendation in the last Newsheet, the publishers of *The Do's and Don'ts of House and Cottage Restoration* by Hugh Lander are pleased to report that several orders have resulted from the mention of their book. They have asked me to point out that, for people ordering by post, the full cost of the book including postage and packing is £12.50.

I also gave you an incorrect telephone number in the last Newsheet; the correct contact details for the publishers are Acanthus Books, Lanner, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BS, telephone 01209 217557. Apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Learning about ...

Unlocking the Secret History of Castles

Tutor: Bryan McNerney. Ever wandered aimlessly around a medieval castle and wished you'd known more about it ... wondered why and how it was built, what sort of people lived in it and why there are so many questions you don't know the answers to? In his own inimitable style, television-historian Bryan McNerney will unlock the hidden history of some of the internationally outstanding castles within reach of the Manor ... as well as a couple of the regionally outstanding hostelrys within reach of the castles!

Friday 6 to Sunday 8 May 2005, residential fee £160 (ensuite £170), non-residential £116. Enquiries: Burton Manor, The Village, Burton, Neston, Cheshire CH64 5SJ, telephone 0151 336 5172, website www.burtonmanor.com.

The Small Country House – Open to View

Tutor: Gail Bent. An 'up close and personal' look at houses which are, for the most part, lived-in-homes, off the beaten tourist track and open to the public on a limited basis. There will be opportunities to meet with owners and administrators to discover the unique personality of each house and to develop an understanding of the historical significance of the house and its owners on both the local and national stage.

5 meetings on Wednesdays from 1 June 2005, 10.30am to 3.30pm. Fee £80. Details from The Centre for Continuing Educationm University of York, telephone 01904 434620, website www.york.ac.uk/inst/cce/.

English Stone Buildings

Tutor: Colin Dickinson. No stone, one might say, is left unturned on this day course allied to the quarrying, uses of, and conservation of English stone. All aspects of the art of building in stone are examined. Monday 6 June 2005, 11am to 4pm, fee £21.50. Enquiries: Alston Hall, Alston Lane, Longridge, Preston PR3 3BP, telephone: 01772 784661, website www.alstonhall.com.

Traditional Life in Lancashire, Cumbria and Yorkshire

Tutor: William Tyler. Blending elements of folklore and local history, this course will look at aspects of life in North Lancashire, Cumbria and the Yorkshire Dales. In addition to classroom sessions, there will be full day visits to Kendal in the Lake District and to Hawes in the Yorkshire Dales. The residential course is aimed at all those with an interest in the past, and who are keen to learn a little more about these three northern counties. Monday 18 July 2005 to Thursday 21 July 2005, fee £222. Enquiries: Alston Hall, as above.

How to achieve the perfect drawing?

A member asked recently what to do when, having almost completed a beautiful and time-consuming final drawing, a large blob of ink drops onto the middle of your tracing paper and ruins your efforts. A little vigorous cursing might make you feel better, but a few other helpful hints were offered by other members:

- "A craft knife can be used to scrape dry Rotring ink off the paper – the point of the blade allows you to be quite precise in removing errors."
- "If you put some white sticky label over mistakes, it can be drawn over again rather than using correction fluid or scalpels. You can cut the label to shape and it's quick. Then you take a photocopy of your finished work and it all looks perfect!"



- "A razor blade held almost parallel to the paper, scratching very lightly, is the answer to removing mistakes (too hard and you go through the tracing paper). You need to finish off with a fine but firm rubber to even out the surface. If I make mistakes I photocopy the drawing and use correction fluid to cover the mistake, and photocopy again."

- "If you use Rotring pens, remember that regular maintenance helps to keep them in good working order – remove the tips and wash them in hot water."
- "Try using disposable drawing pens such as those made by Pilot. These last for a year or two and usually cost £1 to £2, and write well on tracing paper and over correction fluid – which some good drawing pens do not! I have never known these to blot and they are always reliable."

If you have any more hints and tips which might make drawing (or indeed any other aspect of recording buildings) easier for other members, please do send them in to the editor and we'll publish them for the benefit of others.

Vernacular Architecture Group publications

As an affiliated group of the national Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG), the YVBSG receives a copy of the VAG Newsletter which appears in January and June and contains news of activities and events, and also the VAG annual journal, *Vernacular Architecture*. The 2004 edition of *Vernacular Architecture* has just been published and includes articles on 'The unfulfilled potential of the documentary sources' by C R J Currie; 'Butts Cottage, Kirdford: the conversion of trees to timber in the rural Sussex Weald' by J C Kirk; 'Luminescence dating of brick chimneys' by Abby Antrobus; 'Cranked inner principals' by David Clark; 'Regulating the vernacular: the

impact of building regulations in the eighteenth-century highland planned village' by Daniel Maudlin; 'The development of Newark-on-Trent 1100-1750, as demonstrated through its tree-ring dates' by Alison Arnold and Victoria McMillan; 'A medieval urban house with two heated open rooms: 3.5 Butter Street, Alcester' by N W Alcock and A K Moir; 'Recent tree-ring studies of early New England buildings: an evaluation' by Abbott Lowell Cummings; as well as tree-ring date lists and book reviews. If you'd like to borrow the YVBSG's copy of *Vernacular Architecture* (or any of the newsletters), please contact Jacky Quarmby.

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