



YORKSHIRE VERNACULAR BUILDINGS STUDY GROUP

Website: <http://www.yvbsg.org.uk/>

Newsheet No 32

May 2003

YVBSG Events For Your Diary

Annual Recording Conference, Scarborough

Friday 16 to Sunday 18 May 2003

To be based at the Royal Hotel, Scarborough. Details and booking forms already circulated.

Walk around Heptonstall

Sunday 15 June 2003

A walk led by David Cant – booking form enclosed with this newsheet. Heptonstall contains good examples of buildings from the sixteenth century onwards. Numbers will be limited to 20 so early booking is recommended!

Recording in Starbotton

Saturday 19 July 2003

A recording field day will be held in Starbotton, Upper Wharfedale. We plan to record 4 or 5 buildings, including barns. Please contact David Cook (details on the back page of this newsheet) if you would like to join a recording team. If you have not previously attended any YVBSG recording events, please summarise your building recording experience to help us balance the expertise between teams.

As this event will probably take place before the next edition of the newsheet, further details will be mailed to team members in due course.

Recording Work Using Digital Technology

Saturday 16 August 2003

Don McLellan has offered to organise a practical day demonstrating a technique for recording buildings digitally using laser level and CAD. If you are interested, the proposed date for you to pencil in your diaries is Saturday 16 August. The location will be in West Yorkshire; specific details will be announced in the July newsheet. As this is a practical session, numbers will be limited.

Conference Review Day

Sunday 28 September 2003

To review the findings of the Scarborough recording conference. Details to follow.



Committee news

Sue Degnan has stepped down from the committee due to her move north to Newcastle. Many thanks go to Sue for all her work during the past few years.

We welcome Tish Lawson as a member of the committee and hope that she enjoys her new role.

All other committee members were re-elected *nem con* at the AGM in March.

The next committee meeting will be held on Sunday 9 November 2003. If you'd like to raise any matter, please contact David Crook.

The Journal

You may be disappointed to hear that it's now too late to submit articles for the 2003 edition of the annual journal, *Yorkshire Buildings*, which will be published before too long. However, it's not too early to start thinking about contributions for the 2004 edition!

Next newsheet

Many thanks to everybody who contributed to this newsheet. Please send any items for the next newsheet (such as requests for information, events, courses or publications of interest to other members) to the editor by the end of June 2003.

VAG 2004

As reported earlier, the Vernacular Architecture Group's annual spring conference will be held in Yorkshire in April 2004 and is being organised by Malcolm Birdsall. Please note that if you wish to attend the conference (which includes visits to buildings in Whitby and the North York Moors, York, and the Wolds) you must be a member of the VAG. Membership is open to anyone interested in vernacular architecture and costs £20 per annum – for further details

please contact Cathy Groves, VAG Membership Secretary, Archaeology Research School, University of Sheffield, West Court, 2 Mappin Street, Sheffield S1 4DT, email c.m.groves@sheffield.ac.uk, or see the VAG website <http://www.vag.org.uk>. You should bear in mind that membership is not instant as each applicant must be proposed by an current VAG member and elected at a VAG committee meeting in April, September or December.

Learning about ...

From Thatch to Slate: Rural Housing in Lancashire

Tutor: Nigel Morgan. Rural housing in Lancashire changed greatly through the centuries and we will follow its development from the simple 'open hall' type of the Middle Ages to the sophisticated multi-room and storeyed house of the 18th century. Includes visits to houses. Saturdays 10 and 17 May, 10am to 4pm, fee £25 (£11 concessions). Details from Department of Continuing Education, Lancaster University, Lonsdale College, Lancaster LA1 4YN, tel 01524 592623/4, website <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/conted/>.

Discovering Lake District Towns and Villages

Tutor: Andrew Lowe. Four contrasting examples of Lake District towns and villages – Troutbeck, Askham, Ambleside and Keswick – will be visited, to help understand their history, evolution and architectural character. Saturdays 10 May, 7 June, 21 June and 5 July, 1pm to 4pm, fee £40 (£34 or £14 concessions). Details of meeting points to be given on enrolment. Details from Lancaster University as above.

The Half Timbered House

Tutor: Derek de Maine. A detailed account of the origins and evolution of timber construction from early Bronze Age to the Elizabethan half timbered house with emphasis on particular examples in the North West. Thursday 15 May 2003 from 10 am to 4 pm at the University of Manchester. Fee £20. Further details from Veena Seth, tel 0161 275 3285 or see website <http://www.man.ac.uk/cce/index.html>.

Surveying and Building Recording

A practical introduction run by York Archaeological Trust to the main ground-based surveying techniques used as part of archaeological fieldwork, along with the study and recording of standing buildings. Courses available: 16-20 July, 6-10 August, 3-7 September, 17-21 September. Cost £210 (non-residential) or £295 (residential). For further details telephone 01904 663029 or write to St Leonards Training Excavation, Cromwell House, 13 Ogleforth, York YO1 7FG, or see website <http://www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk/yordig/index.htm>.

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!

Buildings of Slaithwaite

Thursday 8 May 2003

Guided walk, organised by the National Trust (tel 01484 847016). Meet 7pm at Carr Lane car park, grid reference SE00 082 142. Donations welcome.

Great Horton: A Village and its Industry

Friday 6 June 2003

University of Bradford Friday Afternoon Walk led by George Sheeran. Must be booked with payment in advance (£3 per walk); places are limited. To obtain a booking form, please telephone the Short Course Unit on (01274) 233213/233216.

Watermills in the Dales

Tuesday 10 June 2003

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Guided Walk, easy, 4 miles, 2pm to 5pm from Sedbergh National Park Centre. Admission free if you arrive by public transport. For details of this and other YDNPA events, telephone the Bainbridge office on 01969 650456 or the Grassington office on 01756 752748, or see website <http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/>.

Historic Dobcross

Thursday 12 June 2003

Guided walk with Saddleworth Historical Society, organised by the National Trust (tel 01484 847016). Meet 7pm at Wool Road car park near the Navigation Inn on the A670.



Aspects of the Stone and Slate Industries in the Lake Counties

Saturday 14 June 2003

Study day at Lancaster University Centre for North-West Regional Studies. Talks include *The Geological History of the Building Stones of the Lake Counties*, *Public Quarries in the Lake Counties*, *The Social and Economic Impact of Slate Quarrying in the Lake Counties*, and *Lime Burning and Lime Kilns in the Lake Counties*. Fee £15. For details phone 01524 593770, or see website <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/cnwr/>.

Study Visit to Whitby

Saturday 21 June 2003

University of Bradford visit led by Paul Jennings and George Sheeran. For a booking form, telephone the Short Course Unit on (01274) 233213/233216.

The Mediaeval House

Tuesday 1 July 2003

Talk by Erik Matthews to Bedale Archaeology and History Society in Bedale Hall at 7.30pm. For further details contact Patricia Tricker on 01677 450176. Non-members welcome – fee £1.50.

National Archaeology Days

Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 July 2003

Watch out for publicity, or contact Council for British Archaeology on 01904 671417.

Society of Architectural Historians

Thursday 4 to Sunday 7 September 2003

Conference in Sheffield. Visits on the Thursday include a tour of vernacular architecture in the area. Cost £30. Details from Dr Richard Morrice, 3 Stafford Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4QZ, email events@sahgb.org.uk, or see website <http://www.sahgb.org.uk>.

Some recent books and articles

Limestone Industries of the Yorkshire Dales by David Johnson. August 2002, Tempus Publishing; ISBN 0752423940, 176 pages, £16.99.

The Fairest Arch in England: Old Ouse Bridge, York, and its Buildings by Barbara Wilson and Frances Mee. 2002, York Archaeological Trust. ISBN 1874454264. Paperback. £16.95. Describes the history of the Ouse crossings, the construction and form of the Tudor bridge and its associated buildings.

Palaces for the People – Prefabs in Post-War Britain by Greg Stevenson. Batsford, to be published May 2003, £12.99, ISBN 0713488239. Records the homes built under the Temporary Housing Programme 1944-49, as well as two-storey prefabs such as the British Iron and Steel Corporation houses and Airey homes, and modular homes erected by London County Council. Illustrates construction methods, interiors, furnishings and gardens with photos from prefab residents.

Buildings history in Kirklees

For the past six months I have had the good fortune to attend two of Kirklees Community History Service's one-day training courses for people interested in local history. The first was on 12 September 2002, entitled 'Buildings Conservation: Protecting and celebrating the built heritage'; the second was on 20 February of this year, entitled 'Sources for Buildings History'.

The morning of 12 September was devoted to two talks describing the planning process and the history of the planning process, followed by group exercises. I found the second talk very stimulating because James Gibson of the Kirklees Planning Services drifted away from the dry topic of his speech into his strong belief in maintaining the historical *context* of buildings – a subject dear to my own heart! Interestingly, however, other people seemed not to have heard him because when we went into our groups to discuss two planning applications before the department at that time, two people in my group objected strongly to having businesses and dwellings in the same building in the centre of Huddersfield and several members of the other group objected to proposed dwellings on a large disused mill site in Meltham being in terraced rows. They thought the houses should be dotted around the site. In fact, that was what the builder had first proposed but, in response to Gibson's objections, had submitted an amended application which was what the group was looking at.

A delicious buffet lunch was provided, after which we heard a talk on the role of the local group. The emphasis of this talk was that we, the people interested in local history and buildings, must be the eyes and ears of the planning department, another subject close to my own heart(!), and how important it is to know your subject. There then followed two presentations by members of two local groups. Although a lot of the day did not pertain specifically to vernacular buildings, overall it was very informative. A valuable part was meeting people from across Kirklees with sometimes similar and sometimes very divergent views to my own.

The subject of the second training day on 20 February was very pertinent to what the group does. It was on 'Sources for Buildings History'. For me it was an excellent revision, plus it extended my knowledge of what is 'out there'. Another plus was the excellent handouts; some listed what is in certain collections, others gave ideas on lateral

thinking. For example, Jane Helliwell, the local history librarian, suggested looking at the adverts in the business directories. I have always found the adverts interesting but never thought to systematically go through the directories looking for a specific individual. I also learned that the electoral rolls can include copyholders, but, of course, men only! Jane's handout stated that 'Key requirements for researching the history of buildings are: determination, 'lateral thinking', inspiration, and luck.' I suspect all YVBSG members will say 'Amen' to that.



After another delicious buffet, Helen Gomersal, of the West Yorkshire Archaeology Service Advisory Service and a fellow American, gave an enthralling presentation on industrial archaeology in the West Riding. If it has to do with industrial archaeology in the West Riding and Helen doesn't know it, it probably isn't worth knowing about – although she did admit that she hadn't found any indications of shipbuilding activity in the area! She also enlarged my vocabulary: what I call corrugated metal monstrosities are 'loose fit industrial buildings'; she calls them 'crinkle metal buildings'. She talked about industries that need a lot of light and industries that need to exclude light, industries that need a lot of ventilation, industries that need a steady water flow, others that need a lot of storage space and showed slides of buildings that perfectly illustrated what she was

talking about. I decided that I want to be like her when I grow up!

After tea Stuart Hartley from the University of Huddersfield School of Architecture presented 'Case Study: Buildings Research'. He began by providing a 'Skeleton of researching a building': (1) The designer; (2) The structure; (3) The foundation; (4) Changes to the building; (5) The economic and social surroundings; and then describing each element. He talked about specific buildings and mentioned that old postcards can be very helpful but stated a caveat: they often are 'doctored'. Angus Ellis, an architect, provided another case study. His talk was about a specific site in Huddersfield that his firm was developing. Like the first case study, Mr Ellis' was a bit beyond what I ever expect to do but he too provided little nuggets of information very valuable to the amateur building historian.

All in all, the whole day was very valuable. Not mentioned before is that I learned that local historians may use the University of Huddersfield library for research and that there is a search catalogue on-line for the West Yorkshire archive holdings. And the value of contact with fellow enthusiasts is shown by the fact that through one of them I found out that there is such a thing as a HAND HELD ELECTRONIC MEASURING DEVICE for people who have to measure buildings by themselves. This is something that I must investigate.

Peggy Secor

Historic Yorkshire gardens

Since September 2002 the Yorkshire Gardens Trust has been involved in a joint project with the Yorkshire Dales National Park to compile an inventory of historic parks, gardens and designed landscapes which lie within the Park's boundaries. This is an aspect of the cultural heritage of the Park which has so far received relatively little attention. At present, only one garden, Parcell Hall, is included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest although some individual garden features have been listed on the Buildings Register. So far a team of researchers has scanned the first editions of the 6-inch and 25-inch Ordnance Survey maps. We are now planning to research in greater detail some parishes which we have identified as having garden features of interest. The first of these will be Sedbergh, Austwick and Grinton/Reeth. We are planning to make site visits to these in the next few months.

We are writing to inform YVBSG members of this project and to ask for any information which they may possess on interesting gardens or garden features in their area. If anyone would like further details please do not hesitate to contact either of the project leaders listed below.

*Moira Fulton, The Old Chapel, Coxwold, York YO61 4AD, tel 01347 868540,
email moira@fulton58.fsnet.co.uk*

*Helen Lazenby, Hill Garth, Kettleasing, Harrogate HG3 2LR, tel 01423 770485,
email helen@lazenby.plus.com*

Geochemistry of soils across abandoned farm sites

I am a researcher at Stirling University working on a project looking at the geochemistry of soils across abandoned farm sites. We are hoping to identify specific chemical signatures within the soils for areas of different function that can form the basis of an archaeological survey technique.

I am looking for a suitable study site within the North York Moors and I'm hoping that you may be able to help me identify possibilities. The site needs to have been abandoned early-mid 20th century and now must be an unroofed ruin but with standing walls. I need to be able to identify a minimum of the house and hearth, byre, garden, and field system. I also need to know something of the history of the site, i.e. when it was built and abandoned and something of the nature of the agriculture. It also needs to be relatively undisturbed since abandonment, no intensive fertilisation/manuring of the fields, so a site under pasture or on moorland is generally what I'm looking for. The other problem I have is that I need to take samples from the floor layers in the buildings and those sites I have seen in Yorkshire tend to have a huge amount of rubble within them.

I have made a short visit to Yorkshire and after talking to the North York Moors National Park archaeologist have seen a number of sites in the Hawnby area, including Carr Cote, New House, Sike House, Cow Wath. However, because of disturbance, lack of identifiable areas on the ground, or the build up of rubble in the interior the only real possibility I have identified is Far House (SE 517 936), though there is still a large amount of interior rubble across much of the structure. I was wondering whether anyone in your society might be able to point me in the direction of other suitable sites? Any help very gratefully received.

Dr Clare Wilson

Dept of Environmental Science, University of Stirling,
Stirling FK9 4LA. Tel 01786 467859,
email c.a.wilson@stir.ac.uk.

Can anyone help Dr Clare Wilson any further – we have already provided her with details from *Houses of the North York Moors and Inventory* RCHME, HMSO 1987. Perhaps someone knows of a suitable site?

Archives on the web

The A2A (Access to Archives) database contains catalogues of archives held across England and dating from the 900s to the present day.

To find out whether archives are of interest to you, it is necessary to consult a catalogue or other finding aid. A2A allows you to search across detailed catalogues from nearly 200 repositories in England beyond the Public Record Office, and to arrange to see or to obtain copies of specific, useful, real archive documents with a few mouse clicks. The database is regularly updated, so revisit often for newly-included catalogues.

The latest county/regional grouping of archives to come on-line via A2A is the 'Yorkshire Signpost' project, which provides catalogue information from Barnsley, Hull and York archive services, the National Railway Museum at York and five university libraries (Bradford, Huddersfield, Hull, Sheffield and York). To search the A2A database, go to <http://www.a2a.pro.gov.uk/>.

Buildings on the box

Look out for *Restoration*, a new series to be transmitted on BBC2 during the summer. Drawing on the expertise of English Heritage and other heritage bodies, each episode will focus on two or more properties in a geographical region of the UK. All styles of building will be featured – from cottages to castles, railway stations to chapels – dating from all periods.

After each programme viewers will be invited to vote for which of the buildings they would most like to see restored. A UK-wide interactive poll will decide which building on the shortlist is most worthy of restoration!



A cautionary tale!

An occasional series of Hazards and Pitfalls for the Unwary Vernacular Archaeologist! The following (severely shortened) came from an article in *The Sunday Times* on 26 January 2003:

A builder, living in Cambridge, was in the habit of holidaying in Normandy in the 1990s. He noticed that many oak timber-framed barns there which had become derelict, some dating from Napoleonic times, were being pulled down and burnt. So he bought a number of them, dismantled them, and brought them back to England. There, all but one (which is currently for sale) have been re-assembled, either in whole or in part and incorporated into new houses around the village of Haslingfield, near Cambridge. So beware!

One picture showed the living room in a new house where part of a barn has been turned into an arcade with gallery above, with more timber-framing exposed in an adjacent wall. Very attractive it looks, too!

Jacky Quarmby

Visiting Ripon?

If you missed the YVBSG picnic at Markenfield Hall near Ripon last summer, you might like to know that the Hall will be open to the public again this year, 2pm-5pm daily from 4 to 18 May and from 15 to 29 June. Entrance £3, concessions £2. For details ring 01765 603 411 or see website <http://www.redrice.com/markenfield/>. Well worth a visit!

And in Ripon itself, Tuesday 1 July sees the opening of Thorpe Prebend House – the newly restored, sole remaining medieval Canon's House – as a museum narrating the story of Ripon Minster and its city. Open Mondays to Saturdays 11am-4pm, Sundays 2pm-4pm. For further information, telephone 01765 603462.

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