

From: Friends of York Walls <richard@hanage.com>
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Friends of York Walls Newsletter

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Friends of York Walls Newsletter

Upcoming Events

Open Days:

Sat 25 May & Mon 27 May: Late May Bank Holiday Weekend

Sat 8 & Sat 29 June

Committee: Tues 4 June; Tues 2 July

York Walls Festival 2019: Sat 10 & Sun 11 August

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FoYW Newsletter - May 2019

York Walls Festival (Martin Hetherington)

Three months to go!

A further festival meeting was held on April 23rd, and updates on events were discussed.

The two pre-festival talks are proving very popular. Barry Crump will hold a second talk on July 27th if enough people sign-up. [Book here now!](#)

Tickets are being snapped up for the talk 'York: a world heritage city?' by John Oxley and Janet Hopton. Please spread the word - our friends at York Explore are putting on a bar (not a free bar, but you can't have everything). [Book here](#)

The first walk for this year's festival has been arranged. 'Red Brick York' will tour York city centre, from King's Manor to Red Tower, led by Ian Tempest. This will start at 4pm on Sat 10th August and there is no need to book.

Bill Hill and Martin Hetherington are working with York St John University to arrange a student to help with the festival in the coming months. The intern will help with social media, publicity and organising events, as well as being an extra contact point for the festival.

Open Days (Martin Hetherington)

We had 547 visitors on Easter Saturday - the second busiest day ever! On Monday 6th May there were 250 visitors, despite a very wet end to the day. Thanks to all who helped out. The weather prompted this tweet:

YorkWallsFriend @YorkWallsFriend · 10 May

It started [#raining](#) during our open day on Monday and has only just stopped! Fishergate Postern Tower had 250 through the doors. The [#York](#) [#building](#) is next open Sat 25 & Mon 27 [#May](#).



Tweet by Martin Hetherington

You can see the whole watery video [here](#).

Learn to Decipher Medieval Handwriting (Bill Hill)

York Explore is offering a one-day course on "Deciphering Medieval Handwriting Script" on Saturday 1 June. This is a beginners session for 16th to 18th century handwriting ('Secretary' hand and 'Italic'). It will last 5 hours, with time for lunch. We can cover the cost of up to four Friends attending if anyone is interested. Details and booking [here](#)

Annual Friends Meeting (Sam McDermott)

About 20 people attended the Annual Friends Meeting, which was held on Saturday 4th May in Clements Hall.

John Shaw of the York Architectural and York Archaeological Society (YAYAS) gave an excellent illustrated talk on 'York in Old Maps'.

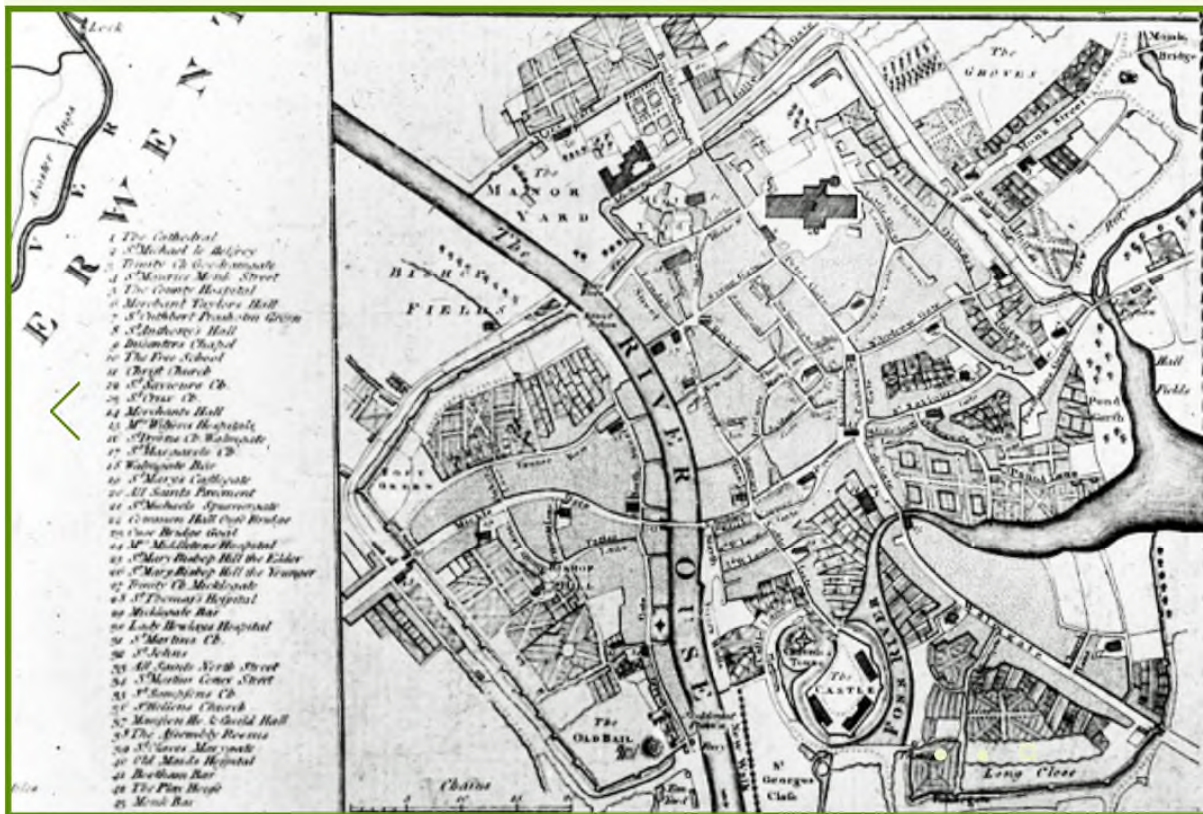


John Shaw (YAYAS) presenting at the AFM - Photo: Sam McDermott



Part of a sketch of the FPT by Francis Place in 1675 - from the Evelyn Collection (Ser No 0829)

The sketch above is the left hand half of a panorama of York, which is just visible on the AFM presentation image above it. It shows the tower, and the postern gate but there are no signs of the portcullis mechanism or access stairs. Was this artistic license?



Francis White's 1775 map of York - from the YAYAS web-site.

"Francis White (fl. 1770–1801), a surveyor of great accuracy, published in 1785 a good plan of York with a map of the whole of the Ainsty on the same sheet." (source: [British Library](#))

This was followed by a discussion of the FPT development plans. Just to give a flavour of the discussions, this is an extract from the list of ideas for the ground floor:

- The problem is access to the stairs and access to the entrance doorway. There are four flows of people in the same small space: up and down the stairs and in and out of the doorway.
- Make the display table smaller and provide narrow but effective storage
- Use the paved area outside for welcome and sales
- Don't forget the flood risk
- Don't destroy the charm
- Provide fact sheets or tablets for those who don't want to climb the stairs
- Have screens that display the activity on each upper floor
- Plan for two-person operation
- Make the fireplace a feature, but don't allow people to hang about there too long
- More encouragement of sponsorship and donations
- Make better use of the long wall and the window wall
- Profitable activities should be near people!
- Reposition the money tower
- Have some sort of sliding drawer for the sponsorship book and materials
- Use rope barriers to help control the flow
- Have a sound system playing music

As you can see there are plenty of good ideas. The challenge will be to bring them together into a coherent overall design for the area. There was an equally long list of ideas for the design of the displays in the tower.

Many thanks to those that helped with organising the AFM event, providing teas and coffees, setting up and clearing away.

FTP Development Sub-groups (Richard Hanage)

We have set three sub-groups to bring together ideas for the development of the FPT and turn them into fundable projects. These are:

- Ground floor - Richard Hanage
- Displays etc - Bill Hill
- Power and lights - Alan Fleming

If anyone would like to join the sub-groups, or submit ideas, please contact us on friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Bar Walls Quarterly Meeting (Alan Fleming)

The latest Bar Walls meeting led by CYC discussed a wide range of issues.

- This year is the 375th anniversary of the Civil War siege of York, so this may be featured in the Walls Festival
- The FoYW are still concerned that the masonry underside of the FPT spiral stairs is spalling and flaking. The CYC masons will look at the problem.
- FoYW thanked Gatehouse Coffee in Walmgate Bar for contributing to the costs of printing their annual leaflets.
- The Walls 'Repair and Restoration' programme has been updated. It is available [here](#).
- Problems with locks and gates on the walls are being addressed.
- Problems with trees at the FPT and Red Tower are not currently progressing due to lack of CYC funds.

Ever Popular FoYW Website (Alan Fleming)

The FoYW Website continues to provide a valuable public service, in particular the "City Walls Trail" pages.



In 2018 there were over 50,000 hits on the City Walls Trail Homepage, an average of 137/day and in August 2018 (first Walls Festival time), there were over 6,300 hits during the month, an average of 203 hits/day

Since the website first went live in December 2011 there have been over 341,000 hits to all pages on the site, and there is every indication that 2019 is already exceeding the 2018 figures.

Check it out at www.yorkwalls.org.uk

Baile Hill in the Past (Richard Hanage)

Still talking about Baile Hill I love looking through 'The Streets of York - Four Centuries of Change' by Darrell Buttery, Ron Cooke, Stephen Lewis and Chris Shepherd, 2018. Below is an almost unrecognisable picture of Baile Hill from the early 1800's that they discovered and described.



'Bailehill' from 'The Streets of York - Four Centuries of Change'

"This intriguing watercolour of the city by Charles Dillon was taken from Baile Hill before major changes were made.

The foreground properties, many built into the rampart, have all gone. At the right of the picture a boat can be seen on the Ouse roughly where the Skeldergate Bridge now stands. Beyond the trees is Clifford's Tower and to its left the great fortified gateway to York Castle, erected in 1825 and

pulled down in 1925.

The castle, the Minster and city churches still dominate the view but a couple of factory chimneys give them some competition.

Today the view observed by Dillon in the early 1800s is much obscured by trees".

Source: 'The Streets of York - Four Centuries of Change', 2018



Baile Hill Today - Photo Richard Hanage

From Our Tweets (Martin Hetherington)

Many of the current tweets are inspired by the coming Festival.





John Oxley & Janet Hopton

York: A World Heritage City?

Reflections on the last bid for World Heritage Site status and preparations for another

Tuesday 9th July, 6pm
(arrive from 5:30pm)

explore
Libraries and Archives

Museum St.

 11 9

Tweet by Marin Hetherington

See more of our tweets at <http://www.twitter.com/yorkwallsfriend>

Holey Mystery (Richard Hanage)

I was walking outside the walls near Fishergate Bar with Simon Mattam after the AFM and we saw these strange holes in the grass, just alongside the footpath.



Mysterious holes in the ramparts - Photo: Richard Hanage

Our best guess is that they are ratholes, and give access to a sewer below. Has anybody any other theories?

Rampart Flower of the Month (Simon Mattam)

May's flower is ivy leaved toadflax, AKA 'mother of thousands' or 'erba della Madonna'.



Ivy leaved toadflax in Roman walls by the Anglian Tower - Photo: Simon Mattam

Ivy leaved toadflax is almost totally a flower of the Walls themselves rather than the earth ramparts. At the moment its 'thousands' [of plants and flowers] are to be found behind the library and beside the wall-walk, especially in the Minster section.

Soon many may be killed by contractors commissioned to use chemicals along the wall-walk, for fear of damage done by less delicate plants which, unlike this 'mother' do not die each winter. I think the Walls will be poorer without this beauty.

John Ruskin, the bi-centenary of whose birth is currently being celebrated in York's Art Gallery, also loved it. Partly because he associated it with the sad beauty of the ruins of Italy - he used its second, Italian alias which dictionaries translate as 'My Lady's Grass'. It probably came from Italy to England, starting to spread independently of gardeners around the time of the Civil War.

Its flowers bend to the light, then its seed heads bend to the dark so they enter cracks in walls. The plants decorate walls delightfully, often flowering from April to October.

Now I am worrying about **June's** flower. Should it be a fifth super-common flower, perhaps white dead nettle [we've had daisy, daffodil & cow parsley]? Or should it be something which is more of a challenge to find?

Suggestions on this - or offers of help with increasing people's enjoyment of nature on the ramparts - are very welcome. Simon Mattam ps.mattam@outlook.com

Richard Hanage (richard@hanage.com)

Editor, on behalf of the FoYW committee.

Glen McGowan	Chair
Penny Heptonstall	Treasurer
Sam McDermott	Secretary
Alan Fleming	Website
Emily Greenaway	Fund-raising
Bill Hill	Fund-raising
Martin Hetherington	Volunteers
Simon Mattam	
Guy Newton	

The committee may be contacted at friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com

If you would like to attend a committee meeting, please contact Sam McDermott.

The meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month.

The 'Friends of York Walls' is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation representing York's walls & defences. Registered Charity: No. 1159300 www.yorkwalls.org.uk



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