

Richard Hanage

From: Friends of York Walls <richard@hanage.com>
Sent: 19 August 2019 20:05
To: richard@hanage.com
Subject: Friends of York Walls Newsletter - August 2019

Friends of York Walls Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)



Friends of York Walls Newsletter

Upcoming Events

Open Days:

Sun 25 Aug: Bank Holiday

Sats 14 and 21 Sept: Heritage Open Days

Sats 5 and 26 Oct

Committee: Tues 3 Sept; Tues 1 Oct

[Click here to sponsor a stone](#)

FoYW Newsletter - August 2019

NB. This brief issue of FoYW e-News provides a summary of the 2019 York Walls Festival and also includes Simon's 'Flower of the Month'.

A full report of the Festival will be included in the September issue.

York Walls Festival (Martin Hetherington)



This year's festival programme was bigger and more varied than in 2018, thanks to the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and the dedication of Bill Hill and our two festival assistants Holly Graham and Rebecca Spencer from York St John University. Highlights included:

- New display at the FPT to show off finds from the YAT dig last winter
- BBQ and events at Red Tower with a visit from the Lord Mayor.
- Mobile phone app 'York Walls Festival' for Android and IOS
- Involvement with Found Fiction (story-writing activities), Fox Lane Books (bookstalls), the River Foss Society (boards on Foss Islands Road about the history and nature of the area) and Good Organisation (supporting homeless people in York)
- Charity challenge: York Mind fundraiser Brian Mullins walked on or near the walls for 24 hours
- A new York Walls Activity Booklet, with 8 pages of fun-filled activities. The Explorer Trails for stamping were back too.
- New videos, thanks to Sharpstick Productions, which were shown at Red Tower.

Festival Plaudits (Martin Hetherington)

Please see the attached [thank you note](#) for the long list of people who helped make the weekend a success. This includes many of the Friends of York Walls - possibly the most we have ever had helping on a single weekend.

We are still working our way through photos and videos from the event and hope to share some in the September newsletter.

Fishergate Postern Tower now has an excellent display about the archaeological dig, and Arran Johnson of YAT, who led the dig, was at the tower all weekend to explain the finds to visitors.

The tower looks a lot brighter, thanks to Alan Fleming's work installing the new lighting, and we have a new intercom system too. We also took forward the idea of having a directional flow for visitors entering and leaving the tower - which worked very well, especially when we were very busy.

Thanks also to Baz for help with the videos. They show the 'Walls in 14 Minutes' and some excerpts of Richard III filmed at FPT.

Walls: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZxJndICeQQ>

Richard III: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f12Cx47Be8>

Life was made much easier by having the two interns from York St John University. Rebecca has now finished her placement, and Holly is just about done. Both featured in Monday's York Press: <https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/17830231.brian-mullins-39-s-24-hour-walk-round-york-walls/>

Visitors to the FPT (Martin Hetherington)

We had an amazing number of visitors at the Tower.

Saturday had 536 visitors, our 5th busiest day ever. Sunday topped that with 609, and is the second busiest day ever. That's 1,145 visitors over the weekend, far exceeding the previous record of 927 on the spring bank holiday weekend of 2016.

Our new 'lanyard' system which enables us to limit the numbers in the tower worked very well - and the maximum of 32 was reached many times - resulting in queues of visitors wanting to climb the stairs. Not quite as many as outside Betty's, but unusual for us.

Flower of the Month (Simon Mattam)



The 'greater mullein'[?] against Davy Tower in Tower Gardens - Photo: Simon Mattam

August's flower is the mullein, AKA 'Aaron's Rod', 'Adam's flannel' 'or 'Cowboys' toilet paper'.

With close mowing of flattish land by the ramparts, the completion of the annual[?] mowing of the rampart slopes and the results of CYC-financed poisoning on the wall-walk I have resorted to this lightly gardened space where once there might have been ramparts.

The ground level in Tower Gardens has risen with flooding so there is no sign of ditch or ramparts in front of the low-looking City Walls. But there is this beautiful plant. Earlier in the year it was also growing by the wall-walk near Robin Hood Tower and by the Roman wall behind the Library.

It is more or less covered with starry hairs so its large, undivided leaves can feel very felty and this leads to some of its common names. These leaves are used as 'Tudor-style toilet wipes' in Fishergate Postern Tower's garderobe, along with their rivals, moss and wool. After picking they stay soft and flexible for much longer than most leaves.

Its name, 'Aaron's Rod', suggests magical power for good and it is said that the early English were told by herbals that "if a man beareth with him one twig of this wort he will not be terrified with any awe, nor will a wild beast hurt him".

It likes disturbed sunny ground and its tiny seeds can spring to life after a long time in the soil but it is easily killed by being uprooted, cut down or overshadowed. It usually flowers in its second year of growth and it is said that each lovely yellow flower lasts less than a day. There are garden varieties but it is probably self-sown in the Tower Gardens and its survival there is not secure.

Now I am wondering about September's flower. Will the ramparts be flowery again in spite of the smothering grass cuttings? Should ferns and/or fungi be considered honorary flowers? What about flowers that are hanging on in there but are more frequent - and far finer - in earlier months?

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



Copyright © 2019 Friends of York Wall, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email because you are a supporter of the 'Friends of York Walls'

Our mailing address is:

Friends of York Wall
50 Grey Towers Drive
Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS7 0LT
United Kingdom

[Add us to your address book](#)

We send you this newsletter because you signed up with us and are on our mailing list. We keep your data secure, do not share it with any other organisations and only use it for our newsletters and relevant mailings.

To opt out just email 'friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com' or unsubscribe by clicking below.

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

