

From: Friends of York Walls <richard@hanage.com>
Sent: 26 November 2019 10:38
To: richard@hanage.com
Subject: Friends of York Walls Newsletter - Nov 2019

Friends of York Walls Newsletter - November 2019

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Friends of York Walls Newsletter

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Open Days: Sat/Sun 25/26 Jan: Residents Weekend

Committee: Tues 3 Dec; Tues 7 Jan

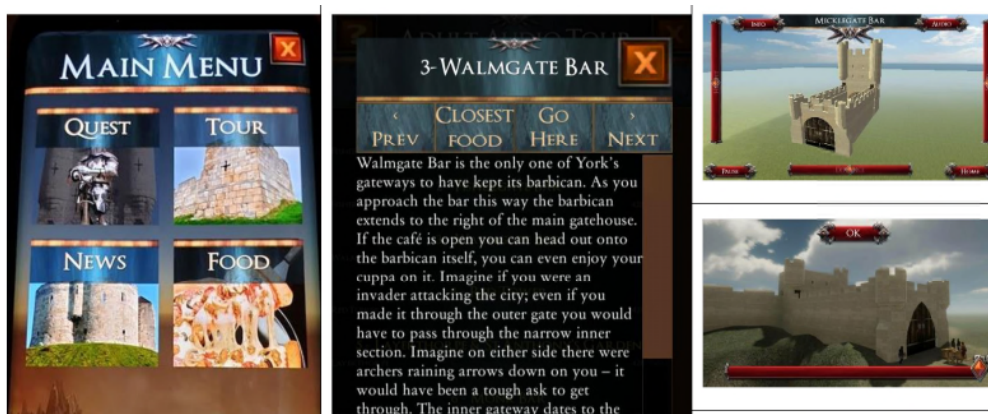
Contents: Festival App and Films Volunteer Co-ordinator Funding News Spiders at the Postern Flower of the Month

NB. There will be no e-News in December, but there will be one in early January, to remind you of our openings in January, for Residents Weekend.

More on the York Walls Festival (Martin Hetherington)

Last month we published the final report of the 2019 York Walls Festival and included extracts in e-News. This month we feature the Festival 'app' and two specially commissioned films.

1. York Walls Festival App



Extract from York Walls Festival app.

In the six months leading up to the festival we worked with Yorgame to develop an App for use by walls walkers. It contains features on 12 locations along the walls, split into two sections. There is text to read or listen to at each point, and most locations also have a photo-slider that takes you back from the present day to show you an indication of how things would have looked in medieval times. Finally, there is a 3D flyover of the sites, and users can zoom in-and-out as they circle around the models.

Around 150 users downloaded the App over the festival weekend, and it remains available at the links below.

[App Store \(iPhone\)](#)

[Play Store \(Android\)](#)

2. York Walls Festival Films

sharpstick films

The Walls in 14 minutes

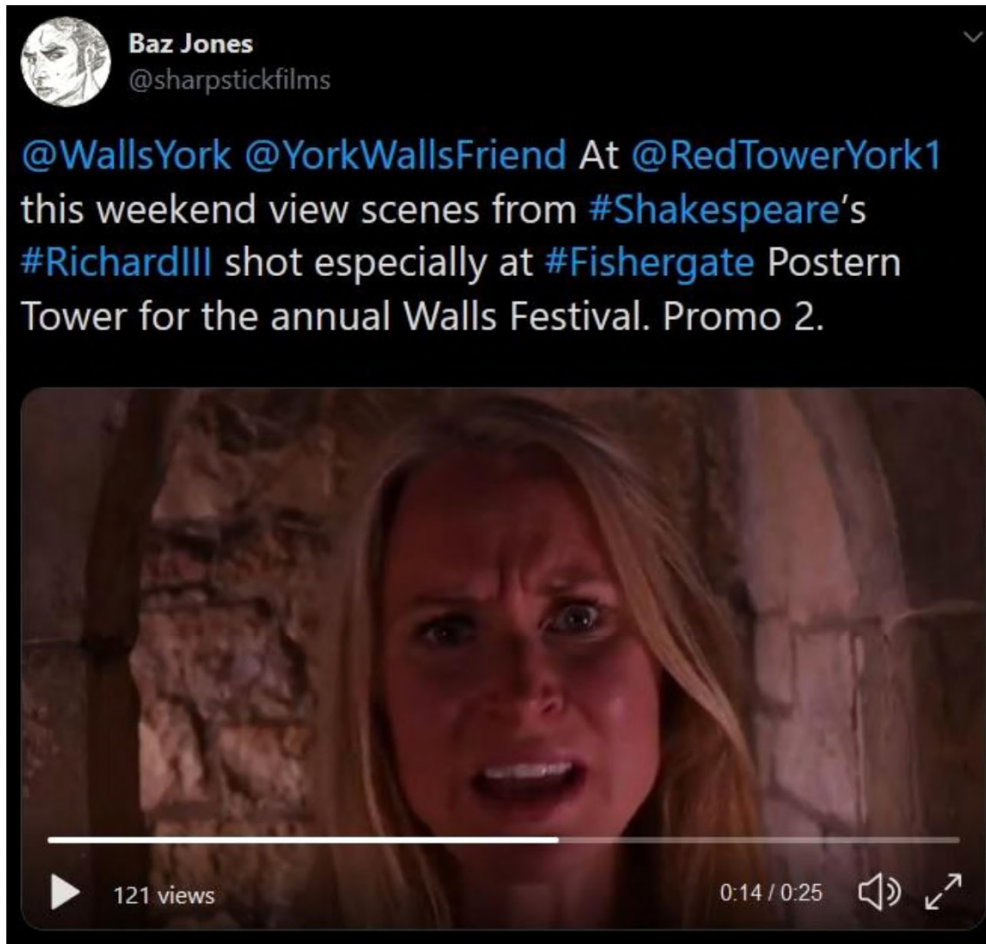
Scenes from Richard III

Displayed at Red Tower during the festival

Two short films were produced for York Walls Festival 2019, and shown at Red Tower over the weekend. Both are on YouTube and can be viewed at the links below.

The first film is a full circuit of the City Walls, beginning near Lendal Bridge and heading clockwise via Bootham Bar, Monk Bar, Walmgate Bar and Micklegate Bar to show the key points of interest. Filmed without commentary, it provides a visual record of how the walls looked in summer 2019.

The second film is a series of six excerpts from Shakespeare's Richard III, some of which were filmed at Fishergate Postern Tower. Richard's short reign (1483-85) included many key events in York, and the medieval walls make a great backdrop to the clips.



A screengrab from Twitter (@sharpstickfilms) showing Kate Hampson in the Richard III scenes

You can see the films on YouTube:

[Scenes from Richard III](#)

[The Walls in 14 minutes](#)

Volunteer Co-ordinator Needed (Martin Hetherington)

Martin is stepping down as co-ordinator of volunteers - so we are looking for a replacement, perhaps on a shared basis. If you would like to know more, please contact Martin at friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com

A summary of the tasks involved:

- Keep the list of active volunteers up-to-date.

- Send one or two emails prior to each Fishergate Postern Tower (FPT) open day to encourage volunteers to sign up, and let the committee know if there are gaps in the cover,
- Help to induct new volunteers at the FPT with support from the FOYW committee and other experienced volunteers
- Complete the opening-up and/or closing-up checklist if volunteering at that time.
- It would be helpful if the volunteer co-ordinator can commit to at least 10 FPT openings each year.

Funding bids in progress (Bill Hill)

Funding bids have been submitted to create a more robust model of the postern gate and portcullis mechanism, to go on the second floor of Fishergate Postern Tower. The timescale for hearing whether any of the bids are successful is December 2019 to February 2020.

There is also an idea, at chrysalis stage only at this point, to raise funds to build a quarter scale model of the portcullis at the tower to explore how it might have worked in practice.

'Spiders at the Postern' (Julian Crabb)

This is a true story – well the first bit is – I am not sure about the second! Here is the first bit. I was a volunteer on the top floor of Fishergate Postern Tower on the afternoon of Saturday the 5th of October from 2.30-4pm. A little girl bounded up the stairs ahead of her mother. Well they do don't they? She would have been about 7 years old I suppose, and looked around, taking it all in. Looking up she said, 'Mummy look at all those spiders' webs'. Mum, panting a little, smiled and said apologetically, 'Katy loves spiders'....

[read the whole story](#)

Rampart Flower of the Month (Simon Mattam)



'Yarrow by Red Tower' - Photo: Simon Mattam

November's flower is yarrow, AKA 'nosebleed' or 'Achillea Millefolium' [=Achilles' thousand-leaved herb].

There were many more in the summer but these tough silvery flowers stand out more this month. On average each plant produces about 1000 seeds and seedlings can come up as late as October. The one in the photo survived mowing by being close to a tree trunk so I suspect there'd be more to see if autumn mowing of the flat ground by the ramparts was less frequent (I am told that the regime is 10 times per year) or more patchy.

For herbalists it is a very valuable plant with wide and apparently contradictory powers hinted at by its aliases above. Anglo-Saxon herbalists passed on the ancient story that Achilles used its numerous and feathery, many-sectioned leaves to treat his soldiers' open battle wounds, it staunched the flow of blood and helped healing.

On the other hand it is said to aid the flow of blood [so is used for menstrual problems and varicose veins] and sniffing the flowers causes nose bleeds; drifting further from medicine, there is even a rhyme to help divination by nose bleed: 'Yarrow, sweet yarrow you bear a white brow, if my love loves me my nose will bleed now'. The flowers are usually silvery white but can also be almost any shade of pink, this brings blood to my mind -like barbers' traditional red and white poles -but I've not heard that herbalists took this as a clue to its main powers.

'Banks of yarrow' in old ballads are probably nothing to do with the plant, they refer to the river Yarrow in the Scots borders -weirdly made more famous by Wordsworth's poem about not going there, he preferred to keep his images from the old songs!

To end with, I really like this image of the plant yarrow from an incantation in Irish Gaelic, yarrow as a magically protective herb to be picked by women as they said: 'I will pick the smooth yarrow that my figure may be sweeter, that my lips may be warmer, that my voice may be gladder. May my voice be like a sunbeam, may my lips be like the juice of the strawberry. May I be an island in the sea, may I be a hill in the land, may I be a star in the dark time, may I be a staff to the weak one: I shall wound every man, no man shall hurt me'.

Now I am wondering about January, as there is no e-News in December. Will any flowers be still hanging on in there -perhaps shepherd's purse, dandelion or mouse-ear -all splendidly named -or will there be the glowing 'winter mushroom' on a stump of wood, tempting me to stretch the definition of 'flower'?

Suggestions on this – or offers of help with increasing people's enjoyment of nature on the ramparts [perhaps by devising a nature trail] – are very welcome. 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	
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

Postern Tower location: YO1 9AF (please do not send mail here - no letterbox!)



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