

From: Friends of York Walls <richard@hanage.com>
Sent: 23 May 2021 12:37
To: richard@hanage.com
Subject: Friends of York Walls Newsletter - May 2021

Friends of York Walls Newsletter - May 2021

[View this email in your browser](#)



Friends of York Walls Newsletter

[Click here to sponsor a stone](#)

Next Open Days:

Sat 29th May: Late Spring bank holiday.
Mon 31st May: Late Spring bank holiday.
Sat 19th June
Sat 3rd July

Contents: Open Days Festival 2021 Tower Two Red Tower Bootham Bar Woollen Walls As I Walked Out Volunteer Guides Twitter Facebook

First 2021 Open Day: 318 Visitors!

Openings: The Fishergate Postern Tower (FPT) opened for the first time this year on Sat 22nd May and will follow on with openings on Sat 29th and Mon 31st, for the Late Spring Bank Holiday.

On this long-awaited first day open since 2020 we had **318 visitors** and collected **nearly £200 in donations and sales**. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped to make it possible.

Volunteering: If you are able to help out as a volunteer for part of each open day, that would be really appreciated. Just add your name to the rota: [Click here to follow the link to the 2021 rota.](#)

Festival 2021 (Baz Jones)

Preparations for this year's York Walls Festival continue at full-speed, and we look forward to announcing details of activities and events as the Summer gets closer!

As always we'll be hosting many free and family-friendly events, with a history, heritage and often a community flavour. Here are some teasers for you to keep you going:

Teaser 1: What could be happening here?



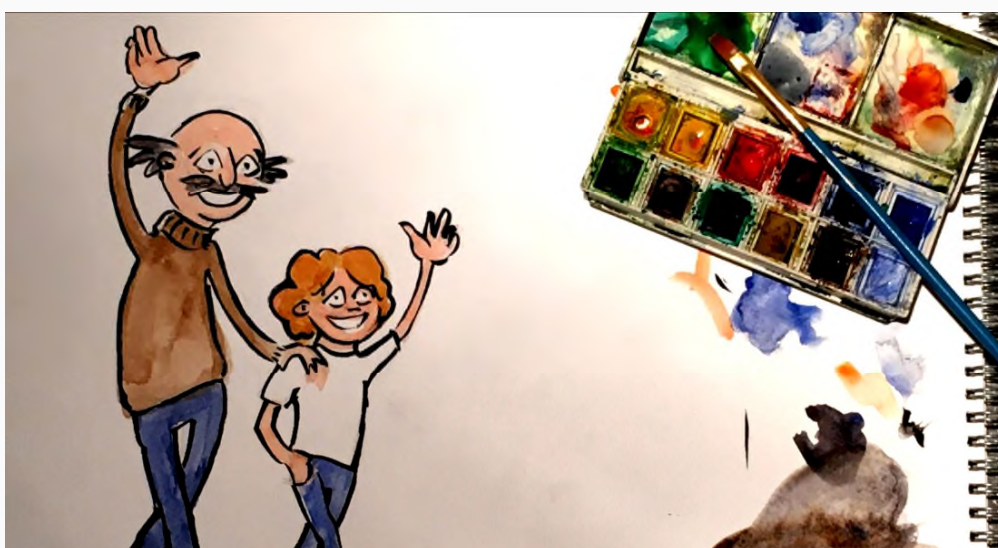
Teaser 1: Near Red Tower - Photo: SharpStick Films

..... And what might it have to do with her???



Teaser 1: Mystery picture.

Teaser 2: Development of this year's Festival Activity Booklet and the always popular Walls Passport is well under way!



Teaser 2: Activity booklet in preparation - both illustrations copyright Leo O'Brien.

As always, keep an eye on the Festival social media for more news over the coming weeks! [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

Tower Two (Louisa Hood)

At Tower Two, the parapet wall has been dismantled. Every stone that has been moved has been photographed and labelled so it can be put back in the correct place when the section of tower is rebuilt, without the cracks and the bulge.



*Left: Tower two partially refilled Right: Numbered stones waiting to be put back.
Both photos by Louisa Hood for CYC.*

Screw piles have been installed for the replacement walkway to sit on, which has been designed by local architects PPIY+ and local engineers Mason Clark Associates.



Artists impression of the new walkway and observation screen - by PPIY+ for CYC

Archaeologists from York Archaeological Trust (YAT) have been on site monitoring works and recording finds. See their social media accounts for further updates! [YAT Twitter](#) [YAT Facebook](#)

The Red Tower Now Re-opened (Ian Tempest)

The Monday lunchtime cafe at the Red Tower on Foss Islands Road has now reopened! From 11.30 tea, coffee, soup, sandwiches, cakes and fruit salads are available at the Tower with table service outside. Donations on a "pay as you feel" basis are requested.



First 2021 opening of Red Tower - Photo Ian Tempest.

It's the first time the cafe has reopened since the original lockdown in March 2020 - the volunteers are delighted to be back! The Red Tower continues to provide weekly support to the local community in Walmgate and the surrounding area every Monday morning, through the ongoing supermarket surplus food distribution to local residents. Budgeting and Council advisory services are also provided.

For more information on the history of the Red Tower and current activities, see the website: www.redtoweryork.org.uk

Bootham Bar Mysteries (Simon Mattam)

FoYW have just started to distribute this year's leaflet [a copy is on the [website](#)] from a purpose-made box that hangs on the portcullis at Bootham Bar. CYC are OK with our doing this, but, partly thanks to Walls Manager, Louisa Hood, this co-operativeness is not the mystery it might have been a few years ago.

Mystery 1

The mystery is that the first box disappeared, leaving behind it about 20 fragments of the floppy, slippery red plastic that had been fixed to the top of the box to defend it against pigeons. The leaflets are free so the box had no money in it, unlike the box that was in the bar a year or so ago which did get regularly damaged. The new one was designed to be easy to take off the portcullis – partly in case anyone had an objection to its being there –but it is difficult to see why anyone would want to steal it.

My only theory is, at best, less than half the answer: if all the 150 leaflets I'd put in had gone then there was no information –just a box saying the map etc. was free. This could have been irritating.

The replacement box suggests comments are sent to Louisa's walls email address and has a card with more information that is revealed if all the leaflets are taken.



The new map box in Bootham Bar - Photo: Simon Mattam

Mystery 2

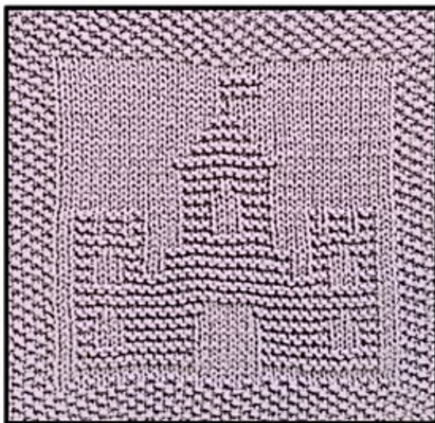
The second mystery is that all 150 leaflets in the replacement box were taken between late Thursday and mid-Sunday – and the Saturday of that weekend had scarcely a dry minute! Another hundred went in the next day and a half. This rate of take-up is similar to that in experiments in previous years but surely the walls are empty compared with previous years. And I'd thought that most of those on the walls at the moment were locals who knew the walls too well to want a leaflet. This seems a mystery.

We'll soon know more about take-up rates – unless we have the mystery of a second missing box!

Help?

I'd like to know how many leaflets are in the box at any time so I'd be grateful if anyone told me and/or checked for litter anywhere close and told me whether or not our leaflets are involved. Offers of other help with this experimental service would, of course, also be very welcome. Please email to [Simon Mattam](mailto:bar walls@york.gov.uk).

Reminder: Festival 2021 Woollen Walls (Baz Jones)



As part of this year's York Walls Festival, we'd love you to join in with our 'Woollen Walls' project! We want to create a wall-hanging/tapestry inspired by York's history and heritage. by combining knitted squares designed and made by you! See details of the 'Terms and Conditions' in the [attached flyer](#)

As I Walked Out (Simon Mattam)

May seems to be the month when folksingers are particularly likely to 'walk out', and this month's nature-note is more of a suggestion than an education. It is a note from a little walk in early May, a walk from the tiny park on Bootham (opposite Sainsburys) to Robin Hood Tower - why not repeat it in late May and look for changes?



Killer by the walls? - Photo: Simon Mattam

The tiny park has been cleansed of the commercial bins it used to house and was looking very neat, if rather lifeless, when I took this photo. The one sign of vigorous green growth on the ground there seemed spring-sprouted from the base of the fire-damaged tower in the Abbey's walls. I suspect it may be the sinister deadly nightshade –but I may well be wrong. Eating a leaf could have told me –apparently that can be enough to kill– but I preferred ignorance! By the end of May its bell-shaped flowers may be in bud –or it may have been killed, deadly nightshade seems, understandably, to be persecuted around the walls [see the August 2016 post on FoYW's guide book's Facebook page: [walkyorkwalls](#)].

Old Palace Wood



Spanish bluebells & cow parsley - Photo: Simon Mattam

This wooded patch is inside the city walls half way to Robin Hood Tower. It is where archbishops had their palace before they moved to Bishopthorpe and it was looking very pretty in early May, though I find the more delicate English bluebells featured last month much more appealing.

Wall Flowers



Flowery hollows - Photo: Simon Mattam

The walls' magnesian limestone is very variable and can develop holes that, along with cracks in the mortar, can become beautifully occupied by flowers. The two commonest, and most flowery, are both in the above photo: yellow corydalis and, more difficult to spot in the photo but very common on this stretch of wall, ivy-leaved toadflax. I think they'll stay in flower for the summer and I think the current CYC position is to spare them from poisoning or weeding as it is unclear that they do any harm to the wall itself.

May in May



May breaking into flower - Photo: Simon Mattam

Just before Robin Hood corner tower there is a small hawthorn tree, at the time of this photo it was just beginning to break into white, almond-scented flower. This is the 'May' of the cautious saying 'ne'er cast a clout till May be out'. It should be fully out by late May.

The walls were very quiet in early May and if you zoom into the left of the tower in the background of this photo you can see two of what I could hear at this point.



Male blackbird at Robin Hood Tower - Photo: Simon Mattam

Blackbird

With my little camera I can only photograph the boldest of birds, this one was singing, but quietly with his beak hardly opening [and apparently not at all open in any of my photos]. I have seen –and heard- the Minster's peregrines from this bit of wall but I am never likely to get a photo. I am slightly more optimistic about photographing a kestrel above the unmown ground [praise be to CYC health and safety concerns for the lack of mowing] inside the walls near the railway station. Any of your walls' wildlife photos – or features - would be welcomed by Richard and me. Please email to [Simon Mattam](mailto:Simon.Mattam@yorkwalls.org)

Volunteers [Always] Needed

As always, we would like to welcome more volunteers to help run the Friends of York Walls and especially to greet visitors at the Fishergate Postern Tower. If you think you might like to join us, please email friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com or just turn up for a chat when we are open.

Wall tour guides wanted!

Do you enjoy showing the Walls to visitors? As the world opens up again, we expect *ad hoc* requests for tours (in fact the first one is in!), so we are looking to recruit more volunteer guides.

Training will be provided and, as with all our volunteering, there is no set commitment: you do what you can, when you can. If you are interested, please [email us](#) by Friday 28 May. We look forward to hearing from you.

Follow us on [Twitter](#):



Friends of York Walls

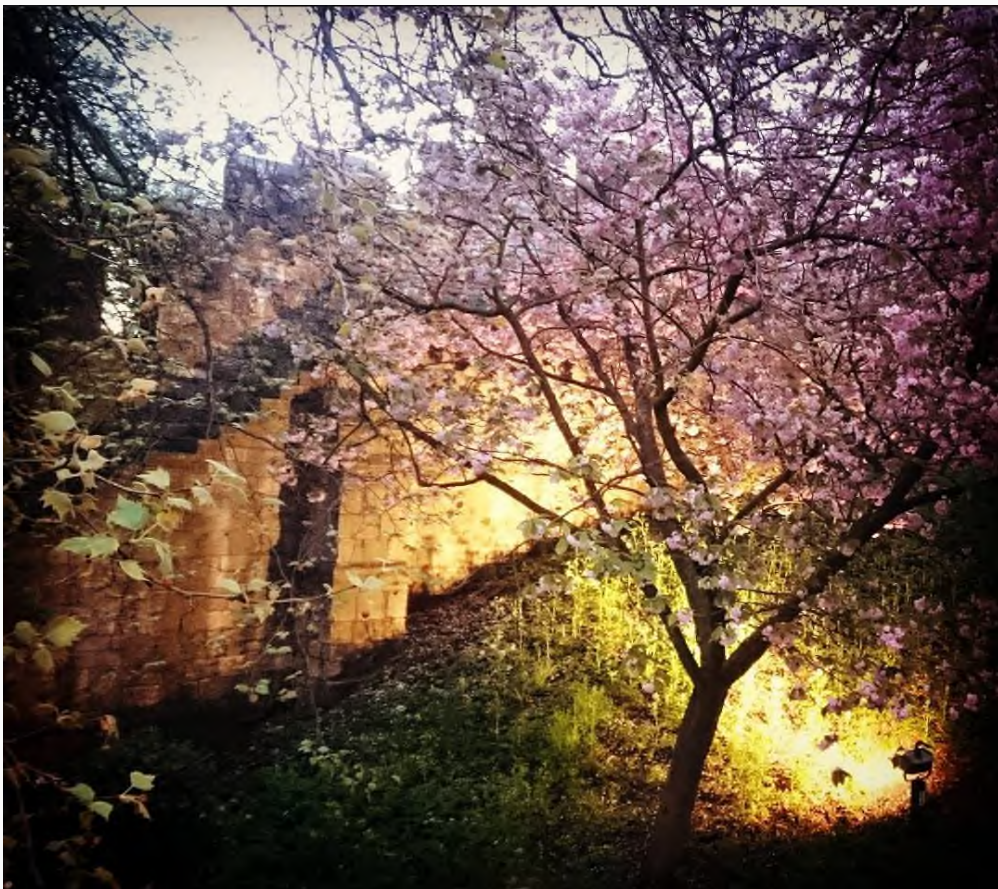
@FriendsofYW

Happy [#StGeorgesDay](#) from [#York](#). Enjoying the walls with a spot of lunch. [@VisitYork](#) [#Yorkshire](#)



Lunch at the 'Fat Badger York', previously the 'Lion and Lamb'

..... and follow us on [Facebook](#):



Illuminated walls - Photo on Facebook: Sally Hauser

Richard Hanage (richard@hanage.com)

Editor, on behalf of the FoYW Committee.

Bill Hill - Chair

Penny Heptonstall - Treasurer

Sam McDermott - Secretary

Alan Fleming - Website

Glen McGowan - Committee member

Simon Mattam - Committee member

Baz Jones - Committee member

The Committee may be contacted at friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com

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

The [virtual] 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!)



Copyright © 2021 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](#)

