

PLACE

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January
Dawn,
York

Spring Newsletter 2018

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A Winter Walk with PLACE in February



Part of the route

Join us for a five-mile ramble in the Ripon-Studley area on Tuesday 20th February. Meet at the car park by the lake in Studley Park (SE 279693) at 10.30am. The route traverses the Valley of the Seven Bridges, follows part of the Ripon Rowel walk and goes through part of Studley Park. It is likely to be muddy in places, so walking boots are essential! There is one short uphill section, where you may find a stick handy. Please bring a packed lunch and wear warm clothing.

This is a free event but please use the booking form to let us know you are coming. Please provide a contact number or e-mail in case of changes due to inclement weather.

"Living Space": New Earswick and the greening of urban design Friday March 16th

A study visit to the village will be led by Michael Hopkinson followed by a visit to the Nature Reserve led by Chris Adams between 11.00am and 2.30pm. The excursion will start at the Open Shop in the centre of New Earswick with a brief talk on the role of the Arts and Crafts movement in pioneering higher standards of design and accommodation in the early twentieth century and their implementation in the building of the village.



Older housing
[Photo: Michael Hopkinson]

A walking tour lasting about an hour will take in all the main features of New Earswick's growth and we will have a mid-day break back at the Open Shop, where there will be toilets and drinks available and an opportunity to eat lunch. Please bring a packed lunch; alternatively sandwiches can be bought at the shops and bakery nearby.

The afternoon session will be a guided walk of the Nature Reserve which was developed on the site of the former brick fields, illustrating how the landscape has been transformed and conserved. Outdoor clothing and footwear needed!

Bus services Nos. 1,13,14 and 20 all stop outside the Open Shop on Hawthorne Terrace. There is some parking behind the Folk Hall but be aware of building work going on. Please book attendance on the PLACE booking form. Cost £5.00 per person.



New Earswick Nature Reserve [Photo: Chris Adams]

Please use the enclosed booking form for all PLACE events

Hop, skip anda nice felt hat! A study day on Rabbit Warrens in Dalby Forest Saturday 14th April

If Beatrix Potter had lived at Hackness or Dalby then the 'Tales of Peter Rabbit' might have taken a much more sinister turn. From the middle of the 18th Century to the late 19th Century the Tabular Hills were the site of a comparatively short-lived industrial, agricultural revolution involving rabbits. The extensive rabbit warren remains on the Tabular hills of the North York Moors are there for all to see yet, sadly, most people never give them a passing thought.

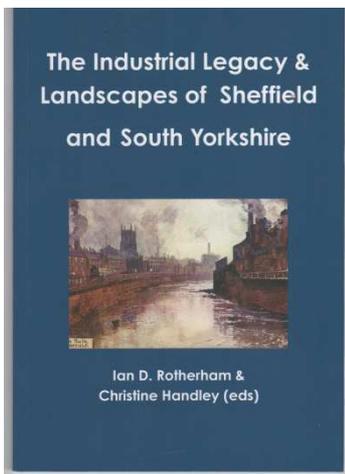
Brian Walker will introduce us to the history of this neglected boom and bust industry with a lecture in the morning looking at the history of the warrens and their place in the landscape followed by an afternoon of site visits in Dalby Forest. Long distance walking will not be involved but participants will need to wear appropriate clothing and footwear for an outdoor visit that will involve an element of 'off-track' walking over unmade ground.

Meet at 10.00am in the Dalby Forest Community Resource Centre (NOT the Visitor Centre), which

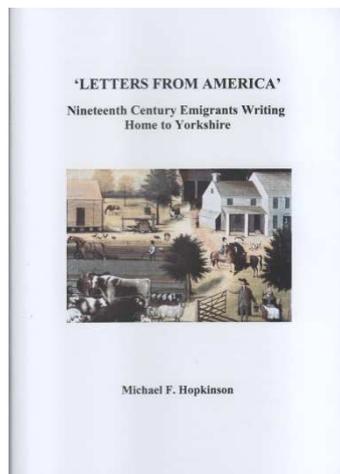


is signed from the main car park at Low Dalby. Dalby Forest is signed from Thornton le Dale on the A170. Follow the signs for the visitor centre to park. Car drivers will be given a code to raise the Forest Drive barriers on leaving. After coffee, Brian Walker will give his introductory talk at 10.30am, followed by discussion. We will then break for lunch (bring a packed lunch or visit the café in the Visitor Centre). At c.1.00pm we will return to our cars and set off c.1.15pm for the site visits. We expect the event to end by c.4.00pm. Cost: £5.00 per person, payable on booking.

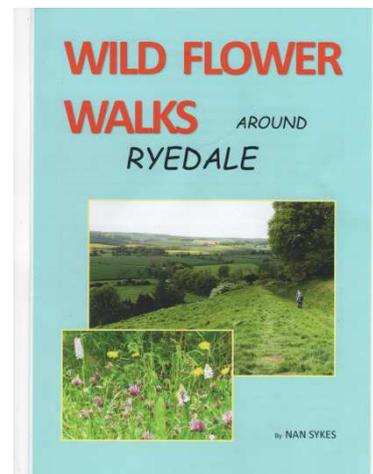
NEW PLACE PUBLICATIONS FOR 2018



Papers from the joint PLACE conference held in Sheffield in spring 2015 have recently been published by *Wildtrack Publishing*. Copies are available from PLACE at the price of £5.00 + £2.00 P & P. Please order your copy using the booking/order form with this newsletter.



Michael Hopkinson has produced a new version of his '*Letters from America*' book, incorporating additional material. The price remains the same: £1.50 + £1.50 P & P. Please use the booking/order form provided.



A new version of Nan Sykes' popular book of *Wild Flower Walks* has just been published, featuring several new walks in the Ryedale area. It includes colour photos to help with flower identification. The price is £3.50 + £2.00 P & P.

PLACE Annual General Meeting and Members' Day, Saturday 12th May 2018

This year's AGM will be held in the delightful market town of Skipton in the Yorkshire Dales.

The venue for the morning will be the Broughton Road Community Centre towards the western end of the town, SD 978514. Skipton is accessible by train, with regular services from Leeds. The Community Centre is 10 minutes' walk from the station but there is also a bus that stops at the station and very close to the venue. For those coming by car, there is limited parking at the Community Centre but plenty of off-street parking nearby.

The day will start with coffee/tea from 10.00am. At 10.30am we shall have a talk by Robert Wright on the history of Skipton, followed by the AGM itself. At the AGM we shall be considering a new constitution for PLACE, as part of the move to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation status (see below), which was mentioned at last year's AGM. We shall also be electing trustees and adopting the 2017 Annual Report and Accounts. Further details of the meeting will be given in the April newsletter but anyone who wishes to put themselves forward for election as a trustee should contact the PLACE Office before the end of March for more information and a nomination form.



You can either bring a packed lunch and eat it in the Community Centre or patronise one of the many eating places in Skipton. In the afternoon there will be a choice of activities, including a woodland walk in the beautiful Skipton Castle Woods, a visit to Skipton Castle (for which there will be an entrance charge), a visit to the Craven Museum in the Town Hall or a self-guided walk around the town. There will be no charge for attendance this year but we do need to know how many people will be coming, so please use the booking form provided. Further details and copies of the Annual Report and new draft constitution will be sent to those who book. They will also be available on our website in due course or as paper copies for those who request them.

The changing status of PLACE

Ever since PLACE was established in 2004 as an independent organisation we have been both a Registered Charity (accountable to the Charity Commission) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (accountable to Companies House). This dual status can be burdensome for small charities like PLACE, so a new status of Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) has been introduced to enable charities to have a new legal status, accountable only to the Charity Commission.

Until this year, the change to a CIO entailed closing down the existing organisation and setting up a new one, but since January 2018 smaller charities have been able to make a direct transfer. Your Board of Trustees wishes to recommend such a direct transfer to the membership. In order to initiate the process we need to adopt a new constitution, which will replace our present Memorandum and Articles of Association. Fortunately, the Charity Commission provides a model constitution that we can use. We intend to bring the draft of this new constitution to this year's AGM.

Changes to Data Protection Law

As you may have heard from the press or media, a new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is coming in this May, which will affect all charities as well as other organisations. The new law seeks to address problems such as the use of personal data without people's consent, the sharing of such data with third parties and intrusive fund-raising activities.

Because of the change in the law, we are required to explain to you what data we hold for you and how we use it. We hold members' names and addresses (a legal requirement for accountancy and gift aid purposes) and, where you have supplied them, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers. We do not hold any personal data supplied to us by other sources and we never share personal data with other individuals or organisations. As you know, we do not engage in fund-raising activities, so all our communications with you relate to PLACE affairs or events.

If you wish to check what personal data we hold for you or wish us to amend the information, please contact the PLACE Office.

REPORTS ON PAST EVENTS

Dark Skies event, October 2017

Eleven PLACE members braved a (happily inaccurate) forecast of gales and heavy rain and made it to Lime Tree Farm and its Observatory, near Grewelthorpe, in the hills to the North-West of Ripon. We were rewarded by a still, clear evening, with an almost full moon, which may have disappointed expectations of Dark Skies, but gave us a superb opportunity, through the powerful telescope outside the Observatory, to examine the moon and some of its craters. They were as clear as if we were about to land there. And that was just the start. In an introductory talk, Martin Whipp, Chairman of The York Astronomical Society, explained the importance and influence of amateur astronomy, the origins of this project and the equipment at The Lime Tree Observatory.

The role of Amateur Astronomy

John Wall (born 1932) is a key figure in the world of amateur astronomy. He was an engineer at Vickers Crayford in Kent and a major contributor to the amateur astronomical activities that flourished as the Crayford Manor House Society. Outside work, he succeeded in building increasingly powerful and innovative telescopes out of whatever materials he could find. One of his major contributions was his invention of a focussing device that reduced six degrees of movement to one, avoiding the inaccuracies of earlier systems. Wall refused to allow Vickers Armstrong to patent the new system, so that it remains available to all who want to use it. His idea was promoted by Richard Chambers and was taken up in the United States. It has been of benefit to all astronomers. After working at Greenwich on the (then) largest refracting telescope in the UK (28"), he left in some frustration and built his own 30" refracting telescope which, although no longer in one piece, remains the 5th largest refractor ever built. In 1977, John Wall created what was at the time the world's biggest amateur telescope. It was used for over 30 years at the Crayford Manor House Astronomical Society.

The Origins of the Lime Tree Farm Observatory

Contact between John Wall and York was established when Martin Whillock, then Secretary of The York Astronomical Society, asked for John's help when dissatisfied with the focuser on their reflecting telescope then in use at York. Subsequently, in 2012, Crayford Manor House was redeveloped, so was no longer available to the Astronomical Society. The 24" telescope came under threat along with its dome. The York Astronomical Society moved it to Lime Tree Farm, a site which is (according to the Sky Quality Meter) almost as Dark as Kielder. The first sightings from here were made in 2016.

The Observatory

After the talk, we turned to the sky itself, half of us to use the outdoor telescope and our own binoculars, half to climb the few wooden stairs into the gallery around the telescope to take turns to peer into the far reaches of space. The remaining clouds had cleared and we scanned the vastness around us to a depth inconceivable to earlier observers. The last century has seen an acceleration of understanding, thanks to technological advances and the tenacity of human curiosity, leaving us awe-struck, not just with what we were seeing, but with the means by which we were seeing it, and the people who had devised those means. We were treated to a view of a globular cluster known as Messier 13, catalogued by Charles Messier, a French comet hunter.

Changing places with the other half of the group, we went outdoors to peer again at all the visible constellations, to remember and be reminded of their ancient names and mythical associations (Andromeda, Perseus.....) and to find through the telescope that a single star might be surrounded by a cluster of tiny stars invisible to the unaided eye. Always more to discover – so many (to us) brave new worlds – but so far none with people in them.

The visit was a wonderful antidote to the besetting problems of our own small world: an inspiration. Peter and Irene Foster have done a wonderful thing in welcoming this observatory into their already inspiring educational and ecological farm and woodland project.

Anne Leonard.

Research Students Conference on Landscapes, November 2017



The research student speakers and Professor Vince Gaffney (second from right). [Photo: Fiona Hopkinson]

In a new joint venture with our partner organisation, the Yorkshire & the North-East Region of the Royal Geographical Society (RGS), we held a conference at York St John University in autumn 2017, featuring presentations by some of the brightest research students from universities in North-East England. The general theme of the conference was ‘Landscapes’ – deliberately broad to enable a wide range of topics and research methods. There were eight research student speakers and one poster presentation. There was also a keynote lecture by Professor Vincent Gaffney (University of Bradford).

Karla Beltran (University of York) transported us to the moors of Ecuador, where she is studying the effects of climate change and the implications for sustainable management of this part of the Andes. Then we were taken to the Upper Mersey estuary, where Andrea Drewitt (University of Salford) is looking at planning issues and their effect on ecosystem services. Isabel Cook (University of Sheffield) focussed on the impacts of climate change on coastal archaeological sites in North Wales. After lunch, the keynote speaker, Professor Vincent Gaffney, gave an inspirational talk on *Landscape and the “New Mapping”*, drawing on his research in Doggerland and more recently the area around Stone Henge. He was followed by two of his own research students, Andy Fraser and Micheál Butler (University of Bradford), who took us under the North Sea, where they have been mapping and modelling submerged landscapes of the former land area of ‘Doggerland’. Philippa Carter (University of Newcastle) then discussed the concept of nostalgia for lost landscapes, with her research on the *Land of Oak and Iron* project in the Derwent Valley. Pip Roddis (University of Leeds) told us about her research on the public response to onshore wind and solar farms in the UK. Rowan Jaines (University of Sheffield) introduced us to her research on understanding working class subjectivity in rural communities, with a case study from The Wash. During the day, Jean McKendree (formerly of the University of York) displayed a poster about her research into the effects of burning regimes on grouse moors in Yorkshire.

All the presentations were of a very high standard and they were delivered clearly to a non-specialist audience. Discussion was an important part of this conference. It was hoped that the audience would contribute ideas and information that would be useful to the students in their research, and we were not disappointed. Lively discussions followed the talks and many suggestions were made for refinements to the research methods and possible new contacts and lines of enquiry. We hope to publish most of the presentations in a book later this year. This event was an experimental one and proved a great success. Many thanks to Professor David McEvoy of the RGS for putting together such an interesting and varied programme, and to the RGS for providing funding for the conference. We hope to be able to organise similar events in the future, fostering a closer relationship between PLACE, the RGS and the research taking place in universities in the region.



PLACE Christmas event 2017 a great success! St Anthony's Hall, York, was the venue for our festive gathering in December. Forty members and friends enjoyed an entertainment from *Ars Ludendi*, based around the origins of our Christmas traditions. This included everything from the medieval 'Second Shepherds' Play' through Victorian melodrama to an extract from one of the 'Just William' stories, interspersed with puritanical rants against any form of enjoyment of the Christmas season! Notwithstanding these rants, everyone had a thoroughly enjoyable evening, with food and drink provided by PLACE. Many thanks to Joanna, Lesley, Gillian, Mike, Robert and Paul for their spirited entertainment and to those PLACE members who assisted with the refreshments.

VERNACULAR BUILDINGS EVENT

Our partner organisation, the Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group, is organising a day school in Leeds on Saturday 17th March, entitled: 'Town and Country: Vernacular Buildings in the Yorkshire Landscape'. It features talks by Barry Harrison, George Sheeran, Kate Giles, David Cant, Sheila Graham and Peter Thornborrow on a wide range of subjects, from longhouses to town houses and from the Pennines to the Wolds. For further details and a booking form, contact David Cook (tel: 01325 310114; e-mail: dcook0@talk21.com). Closing date for bookings: 3rd March 2018.

PLACE subscriptions are due on 1st January each year. If you joined before October 2017 but have not yet paid for 2018 (or do not have a standing order), please send your subscription a.s.a.p.

All our events are open to the general public. Children are welcome, provided they are accompanied by a parent or guardian. Dogs on leads are allowed on some outings, subject to the agreement of the leader (please ask in advance).

We sometimes take photographs at events for publicity purposes. If you do not wish to be photographed, please tell the event organiser at the time.

To contact PLACE:

By post:

PLACE Office,
York St John University,
Lord Mayor's Walk,
York,
YO31 7EX.

N.B. This is a
'virtual' office
and is not
staffed.



By phone: 07989 095924

(NB this is the Chief Executive's mobile number – for emergency use only, please)

By e-mail: place@yorks.ac.uk

Website: www.place.uk.com



Please remember to tell us if you change your e-mail address or other contact details!

PLACE Board and Officers 2017-18

Chief Executive:

Dr Margaret Atherden

Trustees:

Ms Linda Blenkinsip

Ms Aileen Bloomer

(Chair)

Dr Jean Dixon

Mr David Hawtin

Dr Michael Hopkinson
(Treasurer)

Ms Hilary Moxon
(Company Secretary)

Mr Richard Myerscough

Dr George Sheeran

Mr Brian Walker

The next newsletter is due in April 2018