

VOICE OF THE MOORS

NYMA - PROTECTING THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS
FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS



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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Following on from the footnote at the end of my foreword in the last issue of *Voice*, as we now know, on March 11th the World Health Organisation declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic.

The spread of the infection in this country has been both rapid and devastating. At the time of writing (May 28th), there are 265,000 confirmed cases in the UK with the number of deaths having now exceeded 38,000.

Measures which have been put in place to try and restrict the spread of the virus have had a profound effect on all of us with schools and businesses closed, public transport severely restricted and people confined to their homes for weeks. It is hard to assimilate the distressing images from hospitals and care homes and to grasp the overwhelming efforts by doctors and front-line medical and care workers to try and save the lives of the most severely affected people. The loss of life has been an indescribable tragedy for thousands of people and for others who have not lost loved ones, it has still been a life changing experience.

As a result of the drop in the rate of infections in May, the government announced some relaxation in the restrictive measures which have been in place since a lockdown was imposed on March 23rd. Some primary schools will be opening in June and there is a move back to work for many people where social distancing measures can be met. This will allow for the resumption of work even though it may mean a reduced workforce. The COVID-19 pandemic like previous pandemics will end although there is uncertainty as to when that will be or what level of re-infection will follow after restrictions have been lifted. A good deal will depend on the effectiveness of the track and trace system that has been started today. The virus is not going to rapidly disappear. We will have to learn how to live with it and manage further outbreaks. It is possible that a vaccine can be found which will reduce the worst effects and numerous trials are already under way. When we eventually emerge from the pandemic and life assumes a degree of normality, it will be an opportunity to re-evaluate what is really important for our wellbeing, not just for a few of us but for us all.

THE AFTERMATH OF COVID-19

The establishment of National Parks and Access to the Countryside in 1949 was seen as a priority by the government in the immediate post-war period to aid recovery from the devastation of war and the privation which followed and to help with the healing of mind and body. Some comparisons can be made with the post COVID-19 period. During the restrictions on movement in the first two months of the pandemic, it became evident how important it is to people to be able access open spaces, the countryside, the coast and our national parks. It is when we are denied access to these areas that the importance of



Buttercup Field Danby Dale

experiencing our beautiful countryside makes itself felt, just as it was, though to a lesser extent, during the restrictions on movement in the 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak.

By coincidence the Landscapes Review (The Glover Report), now with the government, has something of the inspiration, the spirit and intentions of the 1949 Access to the Countryside and National Parks Act. What stands out in 1949 is the sense of urgency and the speed with which it was delivered. As Julian Glover says in his introduction to the Landscapes Review “We need to reignite the fire and vision which brought this system into being”. In post-COVID 19 times can we expect the government to apply the same sense of urgency in the delivery of the Landscape Review or will it be put on the back burner?

TRAFFIC ISSUES

One of the most noticeable aspects of the “lockdown” has been the absence of road traffic in the National Park. The streams of cars and motor cycles, which mark fair weather and holiday weekends, have been absent during the record breaking spring weather we have had through the months of April and May. Cyclists and walkers out for exercise have enjoyed very quiet traffic free roads across the park.

The other benefit has of course been the clean air, most noticeable in urban areas but also in the clearer long distance views of our countryside. It was reported that in urban areas NO₂ emissions were reduced by over 50%.

EXCEPTIONAL DRY WEATHER

Exceptionally dry spring weather has resulted in fire warning notices being placed around the Park. Rainfall for April recorded in the Upper Esk Valley shows that only 2.5mm of rain fell in the whole of the month. This marks the lowest rainfall recorded for April in this area over a period of 30 years. For the three months of spring, March, April and May a total of 66.5mm was recorded making it the lowest spring rainfall total for 30 years with only 35% of the 30 year average rainfall for this period.

BEETLE DRIVE

During April, people who live in the National Park or close by witnessed a large number of small beetles flying about and dropping out of the sky on clothing and surfaces like garden furniture. They are heather beetles scientifically known as *Lochmaea suturalis* and as part of their life-cycle they swarm out of the heather to breed during April and May when the weather warms up to about 16C. It is possible that the unusually large numbers of the beetle which have appeared this year is the result of them surviving a very mild winter this year followed by a very warm dry spring. Very cold harsh winters can significantly reduce the numbers. Normally they fly just a couple of kilometres but the strong winds carried them as far away as the coast where they appear to have dropped into the sea and were subsequently washed up on sections of beach in huge numbers.

ANGLO AMERICAN WOODSMITH PROJECT

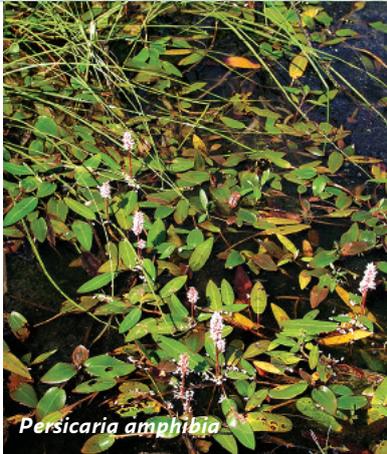
There was a significant pause through March and April in the construction and development activity on the mining project. Re-structuring after the financial collapse of Sirius Minerals and the arrival of the COVID-19 virus pandemic have held back progress with construction work at the mine head site and at Lockwood Beck. Some activity has now recommenced at the mine head site formerly Doves Nest Farm. Work is taking place on the service shaft to prepare for the start of shaft sinking down to 1500m by the Shaft Boring Road Header (SBR). This is expected to begin in the next two or three weeks. Additional work is taking place on the production foreshaft and on preparation for sinking the mineral transport shaft. Lockwood Beck, the site of the intermediate tunnel access shaft, is still restricted to care and maintenance with no date for construction work to recommence. The tunnel drive from Wilton has now reached about 6Km towards Lockwood Beck which suggests it will be close to Tocketts Lythe which was originally proposed as a tunnel access point but then abandoned.

TOM CHADWICK

THE DOCK FAMILY



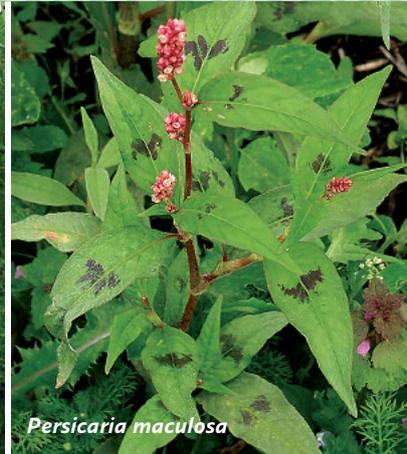
Persicaria bistorta



Persicaria amphibia



Persicaria lapathifolia



Persicaria maculosa

MOST people will not give a second glance at a dock plant or 'docken', *Rumex sp.* except in relief if in need of its cool leaf to calm a nettle sting or in annoyance when such a pernicious 'weed' with its long, difficult to eradicate roots has taken over their garden. But they may gaze in awe at the bright red blanket covering some of our higher acidic moorland in summer; the small delicate sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella* in flower. But the dock is a sign of good rich soil while the sheep's sorrel indicates dry degraded, often over-burned peat. Both docks and sorrels together with the bistorts, knotgrasses and knotweeds belong to the same family – the *Polygonaceae*.

It is a family of mostly perennial herbs with alternate, generally simple leaves which have a papery sheath at the node where they attach to the stem. The flowers are usually reddish brown to pink/ white in six segments ripening to form a triangular hard nut. The brown stems and seeds often persist over winter and are a life saver for small birds. There are a large number of species in the family but I will concentrate on the more widespread ones found in our area.

The three common docks are the broad leaved or common dock *Rumex obtusifolius* a perennial of fields, rough grasslands and waysides in rich soils; the curled dock *Rumex crispus* an annual or short-lived perennial of arable and wasteland and coasts; and the wood dock *Rumex sanguineus*, also a short lived perennial of damp woods, shady areas and hedge banks.

The two sorrels prefer quite different habitats too; the common sorrel *Rumex acetosa* is found in hedgerows and rough older grassland while, as mentioned before, the sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella*, prefers acid upland sites.

The more showy pink flowered persicarias are either annual weeds of cultivated land, red leg *Persicaria maculosa* and pale persicaria *Persicaria lapathifolia* or perennials of wet *Persicaria bistorta* or water logged *Persicaria amphibia* ground. The black bindweed *Fallopia convolvulus* is a climbing annual of open soils and cultivated fields while the knot grasses *Polygonum aviculare* and *Polygonum arenastrum* are spreading plants of similar habitats.

As well as birds enjoying seeds of some of the species, in the past we have also used the seeds of the black bindweed from the early Bronze Age and of course may use the seed of the related buckwheat *Fagopyrum esculentum* and its flour as a gluten free food. We also enjoy eating the stems of rhubarb *Rhem sp.*, another family member and the leaves of many species were, and in fact are, still eaten. The young leaves of bistort were used as a pot herb and vegetable and the roots roasted, but more usually the leaves were the main ingredient of Easter ledger or dock pudding, and the plants are often found in old churchyards. The leaves of the common sorrel were, and are on the continent, used in salads, soups and sauces, its acid sharpness acting as an appetiser and digestive, this acidity also making them a cheap alternative for apples and lemons in baking. And of course, the young shoots and leaves of the alien relative Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica* are edible and good! The young leaves of the dock are edible though not pleasant, even cattle do not eat them, but their large cool leaves were used to wrap butter in.

The leaves of all the family are high in vitamin C, thus antiscorbutic, but they also contain oxalic acid so any consumption should not be excessive. In herbal medicine both the leaves and the roots are used either externally as a poultice or internally as an infusion. The leaves, particularly of the dock, are immediately cooling for stings hence the old saying "in dock, out nettle", and anti-inflammatory for bites, scalds, blisters and sunburn. They also have astringent properties so will staunch bleeding for wounds, cuts and bruises. This astringency makes them a good gargle for mouth and tooth problems, sore throats, coughs and laryngitis, and with stomach problems such as diarrhoea, though the root is mildly laxative. The leaves and roots act as a diuretic, cleansing the blood of toxins, a spring tonic to aid kidney and liver function thus improving skin problems and rheumatism as well.

An interesting family we see daily but rarely fully appreciate.

ANNE PRESS

NEWTON HOUSE - A HOUSE FOR ALL REASONS

RESIDENCE; Shooting Lodge; Bomb Disposal HQ; Field Study Centre.

Until the Forestry Commission acquired the Newton House estate in 1967, few people would have branched off the B1416 to visit Falling Foss. With the opening up of the surrounding woodland for recreation, many now travel down the short road from Red Gates corner. Some may notice a large house down to the right, Newton House, but few will see the stone obelisk near to the farm buildings.

The Egyptian style obelisk was erected over the spring which supplies water to both Newton House and the nearby farm and is a memorial to Jonas Brown who built Newton House in about 1775. A translation of a worn Latin inscription on the obelisk reads:

“Pause, traveller,

The lands adjacent were left more than usually dishevelled by nature on account of precipices, rough valleys and jagged rocks, and covered on every side with a heath which was well nigh inexterminable.

But, in truth, how great a change; having been subject to the plough you see it now divided into arable and pasture land and most pleasing garden for the purpose of pleasure and health; who cleared it all, you wonder, who made so great a change?

Jonas Brown, an energetic old man, gifted with great ability, after he had been much occupied in most diverse ways, prepared himself a seat near this monument, not that he might languish at ease, or become a listless old man, but in perfecting and beautifying the same, he might, as he advanced in age, be devoting himself to works which were at the same time useful as well as pleasing.

After a long life devoted to utility, benevolence and piety, he died and went to the Heavenly Paradise on 5th April, 1799, aged 82”

On the reverse side;

“The kindly nymph who lies beneath this stone gives the waters.

So may you lie low when you offer gifts.

Let not your left hand know what your right hand offers.”

Jonas Brown had a large stake in the Saltwick alum works and also became a wealthy shipowner. He was married twice, in 1738 to Margaret Jackson who died in 1771 and again in 1774 to Sarah Williams who sadly died only seven years later. There were several children from the two marriages.

As the quotation on the obelisk outlines, Jonas quickly set about improving the grounds around his new house. Trees were planted, gardens laid out and a folly created in the woods. Carved out of a natural sandstone outcrop, The Hermitage has the date 1790 and the initials G.C. carved into its face. G.C. was George Chubb who was employed by Jonas as a general servant. On the top of the structure are two carved stone seats and to the front is a low wall from which there are views over the valley. The Coast to Coast Walk

passes The Hermitage, but nearby Newton House is hardly visible amongst the trees.

After Jonas died the house was occupied by his half-brother Thomas Brown. After passing through several other hands, the property eventually came into the ownership of the Brooksbank family of Healaugh Manor near Tadcaster and used as a shooting lodge. In 1942 the Army requisitioned the estate to use its moorland as a training ground, Newton House being the headquarters of the range warden. Later, bomb disposal squads used the house as a base while clearing unexploded missiles from the moorland. The 3,200 acre estate was finally bought by the Forestry Commission in 1967. 600 acres of farmland were passed to the Ministry of Agriculture, 300 acres of existing woodland would be developed for recreation, 500 acres were to remain unplanted and the remaining 1,800 acres would be planted with mixed conifers. Newton House and its gardens were sold to the British Young Naturalists' Association for use as a field study centre. The property is now in private ownership.

Falling Foss with its nearby tea room and pleasant woodland walks is now a popular place to visit. Many of the trees planted on the moor by the Commission in the early 1970s have since reached economic maturity and have been felled, the area being replanted with a second crop. Through all these changes Falling Foss keeps flowing and George Chubb's Hermitage still stands as a memorial to a bygone age. What would Jonas Brown make of it all?!

Footnote: Although the obelisk states that Jonas 'went to the Heavenly Paradise' in April 1799, in fact he died on 28th March; perhaps he was delayed!

ALAN STANIFORTH



Newton House



The Obelisk



The Hermitage

DIY COMMUNITY APPLE PRESSING



Last year Moor Sustainable ran a very successful apple pressing project in lots of communities in and around the North York Moors from Great Ayton to Lythe near Whitby. We pressed over 2 tonnes of apples and made about 900 litres of juice. Our aim was to use a good local food resource that can otherwise go to waste, so producing a delicious healthy fruit juice for our communities and to help the environment by cutting food miles. People brought along their clean apples and containers and went away with their juice – we pasteurised some juice in glass bottles (making it last for about a year) or some people froze their juice in plastic containers.

This autumn Moor Sustainable would like to make its apple pressing equipment

available to the community to use themselves, virus restrictions allowing. We have an electric apple mill, a hand crusher, two presses and a pasteuriser available and hope that individuals and groups might want to organise small apple pressing days for their village or community group. We would invite any village halls, parish councils, church groups, women's institutes, pubs, allotment groups or groups of friends etc that might be interested to contact us through our website www.moorsustainable.org.uk, our FaceBook page or telephone 01947 840708. There will be a small charge for borrowing the equipment to help us keep this project going.

CLARE CHURLEY

Photo © Caryn Loftus

POETRY

BLUEBELLS OF RICCALDALE

When snowdrops poke their welcome faces from beneath a frost-bound earth,
They are, for sure, a joy to see, a sign of hope, rebirth.
In spring fair Fardale's daffodils shake their heads in sheer delight,
And many will say – for they believe it so – 'There is no finer sight'.

To see the old gnarled hawthorn miraculously turn to cream,
Mantled with a myriad blooms, may-blossomed so serene.
Or when summer moorland's in a heathered-purple glow:
It's then that some will bid me 'see' and I nod and say 'I know!'

See cornfields sway like liquid gold, burnished by the sun,
Wild woodbine waft its perfume wide when summer evenings come.
Sweet meadows brimmed with buttercups revive the weary eye,
Festooned with bright-eyed daisies staring full-face at the sky.

When harebells with the breeze do dance, they fill one with full joy,
The wayside violet hangs its tiny head so tender and so coy.
So graceful stands the rowan tree with berries blooded red,
Caught by the dying Autumn sun: most beautiful 'tis said.

These things I grant are beautiful, of that I must agree,
They lift the heart, enthral and charm, so sure a thrill to see.
But to me there's one of Nature's sights against which these wonders pale,
It is to view, when at their best, bluebells of Riccaldale.

Comparisons are foolish, for all beauty stands apart,
And yet, incomparable or not, they haunt my soul and heart.
For still I have their deep, deep blue indelible on my brain,
Emblazoned on my inward eye, a fragrant wild refrain.

Three score spring times have I known, a blessing that's for sure.
But who can know the future? How long will one endure?
Though I may not ever glimpse again their perfect beauty, yet
They'll bide with me till the day I die, a sight I shan't forget.

AINSLEY, JUNE 2000

Photo © Albert Elliott

MAGICAL MOORS MOMENTS NUMBER 2

IN MY early teens, “spotting things” became an all-consuming obsession. Trains, buses, planes, each attracted enthusiastic attention.

These were the days of the 2/6d London Red Rover ticket, one’s passport to airports, bus depots and especially to railway engine sheds.

In those dark caverns of smoke and stabbing shafts of light, the haunt of towering locomotives, intruding schoolboys ran the gauntlet of the engine-shed staff, keen to throw you out if they could catch you.

The locos, whose survivors, now so lovingly maintained in smart clean colours, were then sooty behemoths; even the glamorous ‘Streaks’ as they were affectionately known, which stirred special excitement, stood as drab, work-wearied souls.

Unhelpfully to my education, I saw school as an obstacle to “spotting things”. But this alleged misspending of my youth, turned out to have a very silver lining.

Many years later, I had the privilege to be appointed to the national English Regions Grant Committee of the Heritage Lottery Fund and subsequently became its first Regional Chair in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Here, the unexpected value of my spotting career came to an unlikely fruition. For the objects of avid and erstwhile useless interests were now the subjects of heritage restoration projects ... and I knew all about them in their working lives compared with the other committee members.

Amongst the applications granted was one for the restoration of the Sir Nigel Gresley, an A4 Pacific (aka Streak). How the Committee smiled when they saw the photographs of this wonderful machine in the officer’s grant-bid presentation. Would we provide the funds to fix it ... was that not a silly question?

I had told my wife, Jan, that secretly I hoped that the restoration project would be completed before my tenure as Chair came to an end, so I could ‘do the launch’ ... and maybe just maybe ... have the dream-ride of youth on the footplate.

But restoration took a lot longer than planned and time and opportunity passed.

However, on my 60th birthday, I was in for a surprise. Jan took me on a mystery ride to Pickering station.

On the platform, a whistle sounded from somewhere out of sight. I wonder if it’s the Sir Nigel, I mused. Then, round the curve it came beautifully clean and sparkling blue.

‘I’m off to find out how it’s going’, I explained with a sort of proprietary assumption that I was a part of its history.

Leaning up towards the coal-dust blackened driver, he promptly enquired: ‘Are you Ian Carstairs?’ ... ‘Er ...yes’, I quizzically replied. ‘Well, you are coming with us’, he added. I am told the expression on my face was something to behold.



Jan had talked to the Railway staff and they’d hatched a plan to put the engine on specially.

I saved my ride on the footplate for the return journey from Grosmont with the Sir Nigel facing forward.

Thumping up Beck Hole incline, with cheerful faces waving from trackside vantage points, in the cab of that living, breathing piece of machinery was such a unique experience. The sounds inside a steam locomotive are so very different to what you hear outside, lots of clanking and grumbling, and then there’s the heat of the fire.

In Goathland, we passed the *Green Arrow* on its last journey, travelling in the opposite direction. Now over the summit we cruised past the exquisite Fen Bog, which posed such a challenge to the builders of the railway, before curving into the steeper-sided gouge through the moorland. Extraordinary to think that before the railway came, a canal was proposed to be built up and over this somewhat implausible route.

Halting momentarily at a signal outside Levisham station, we then advanced slowly into the platform. And there on the other side stood my favourite seat, a place to sit and contemplate the world and take a breather from the pressure of daily life.

Now, the long run down and out of Newtondale through Newbridge, before gliding gently into our terminus at Pickering station.

It had been a simply unforgettable morning, thanks not only to my wife, but to the kindness of the staff at the railway who played along with the surprise.

Afterwards Jan told me that just a day or two before, there had been a hitch with the engine and a chance it couldn’t be run. Can you imagine how disappointing that it would have been if that had happened?

IAN CARSTAIRS

KENDALL'S LAKES

Meltwater channel at Jugger Howe on the A171

WATER runs downhill. It erodes valleys, gullies, channels, and canyons as it heads for the lowlands and the sea. So why do some of the valleys in the North York Moors slope inland, away from the sea or, even more bizarrely, cut *across* the hillsides rather than down them? Travel down the A171 from Whitby towards Scarborough and you will cross a valley at Pond Hill which slopes inland. An even more impressive example is crossed soon after passing the Flask Inn and just before the Lyke Wake Walk crossing at Jugger Howe. (The old road still drops into it.) Although boggy, these channels contain no stream. Take the back road from Goathland towards Egton Bridge and by Randy Mere you will drive along the edge of a channel cutting across the slope of the land. Many other examples of these mosses, slacks and swangs may be seen, particularly in the northern areas of the North York Moors and most of them, whilst boggy, seldom contain a stream.

When Henry Belcher published his book *The Scenery of the Whitby and Pickering Railway* in 1836 to celebrate the opening of the route, he waxed lyrical about the scenery with the following lines;

*'The moorland summits wild and bleak,
Dry rocky channels show,
Like furrows on an aged cheek,
Where tears have ceased to flow'*

Nobody appears to have offered any suggestion as to how these unusual channels were formed until the publication in 1902 of *A System of Glacier Lakes in the Cleveland Hills* by Percy Fry Kendall. In what is now regarded as a classic of its time, Kendall proposed a series of ice dammed lakes throughout the moors connected by channels cut into the hillsides by water overflowing from one to another until it escaped southwards into the Vale of Pickering, which eventually became Lake Pickering. He proposed two principal lake systems, one in the Esk valley the other in the Hackness valley.

The realisation that huge ice sheets had once covered most of Britain and the continent in geologically recent times had only been realised during the late decades of the 19th century. Once this idea had been accepted, geologists and geographers were able to look at the landscape from an entirely new perspective. By the turn of the 19th century, the superficial deposits which plaster the coastline of much of northern Britain were rightly interpreted as the residue from glacial action, the erratics they contain indicating the direction in which the ice moved that brought them here.

Kendall postulated that glacial ice had surrounded the North York Moors on three sides and pushed lobes up the Esk valley, into the western entrance of Kildale and into either end of the Vale of Pickering. This led to the creation of a series of glacial lakes particularly in the Esk and Hackness valleys and later, the Vale of Pickering. As these lakes filled and overflowed, the water eroded channels on the hillsides either away from the ice front, Kendall's 'direct' channels, or along its edge across the hillsides; he called these 'marginal' channels.

A lake stretching from Lealholm to Kildale and rising to around the 750-foot contour was suggested by Kendall, the overflowing water from which cut a series of marginal channels as it escaped towards Fen Bog. Randy Mere sits in one of these channels which contours back towards Egton Bridge. Higher up the hillside a second parallel channel, Lady Bridge Slack and Purse Dyke Slack, suggests either a local advance or retreat of the ice.

From a lake in the Wheeldale/Fen Bog area the water eventually rose to the lowest point in the east-west ridge of the high moor and began to overflow southwards. The creation of Newton Dale had begun. This magnificent direct overflow channel eventually drained the northern lake system into the Vale of Pickering.

Whilst this action was in progress a similar although smaller system was in operation which had its beginnings in the

Iburndale valley. Water from a lake here cut Biller Howe Dale Slack directly towards the sea but, meeting with the ice front near present day Foulisike Farm it was turned south as it drained into Jugger Howe Beck and so into Harwood Dale lake. This in turn overflowed the Tabular Hill escarpment to cut (or enlarge?) the Landgale valley. As there was no Forge Valley in existence at the time Hackness Lake now formed, blocked by ice at Thorne Park, and the same pattern was repeated. Forge Valley is another classic example of a direct overflow channel which drained Lake Hackness into the Vale of Pickering. Kirkham Gorge eventually became the route by which Lake Pickering was drained into the Vale of York.

Percy Kendall's neat explanation for the evidence of this story is rightly regarded as a classic study of its time and is still held to be broadly correct. More recent research has suggested that some of his marginal channels may, in fact, have been formed under the ice rather than along its margins. This would demand that the ice extended over a greater area than Kendall envisaged but this does not diminish his classic interpretation.

Perhaps the most tantalising question concerning the glaciation of the North York Moors is, how long did Newton Dale take to form? Kendall gives no time scale but implies what it would not take very long once the water started overflowing. Researchers in the 1970s suggested that the valley was functional for up to ten to twenty years. In an article in *Voice of the Moors* in 2003, Peter Woods and John Farquhar put forward their opposing ideas on the formation of Newton Dale. Peter went for the cataclysmic explanation and suggested it may have taken less than a week to erode the valley! He cites catastrophic ice dam failures in America and explains the possible mechanism based on the fact that ice floats. John, by contrast, settles for a more gentle



approach suggesting that a series of valleys, already in existence before the Ice Age, were simply gradually enlarged by the overflowing water.

Was there already a valley down the dip slope of the moors into which the glacial waters flowed thus enlarging the valley to its present size? Exactly the same question may be asked in the case of both Forge Valley and Langdale.

The question of how long it took to erode Newton Dale is still in dispute but the fact remains that it is perhaps the most impressive glacial drainage channel in the country. Kendall's classic work here in the North York Moors led to many similar features being recognised throughout many other areas in the country.

Standing on the hillside above Lealholm today, it is not difficult to imagine a huge lake stretching towards Kildale and penetrating the tributary valleys. Before Kendall, Canon Atkinson in his 1891 publication *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish*, envisaged a lake in Eskdale after seeing the valley filled with early morning mist.

As you travel the moorlands today keep a lookout for
'furrows on an aged cheek, where tears have ceased to flow'

ALAN STANFORTH

Kendall's map of the glaciation of the North York Moors



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ELGEE



MONDAY 23 MARCH 2020: the coronavirus and a car service led me to head up Guisborough's Belmangate on a fine, slightly misty morning. I recall walking this way in 1973 when preparing with friends to attempt the Lyke Wake Walk. That time we made it to Commondale and refreshment at its pub. Thoughts of Commondale remind me it was home to Frank Elgee, *Man of the Moors*. On ascending into Guisborough Woods I'm entering the North York Moors National Park. I keep climbing on a zigzag route. We're dutifully learning to use

terms such as 'social distancing' and in a choreography of compliance, the occasional walker, horse rider or cyclist and I keep our distance.

On the way up through woodland and along tracks I notice familiar Cleveland Way signs and Highcliff Nab, but when I turn round there's a startling sight. Guisborough is laid below and the scale of housing development comes as a shock, despite having witnessed its growth since attending school there. Continuing up the escarpment, I spot a gate: beyond there's open moorland. Ahead of the gate there's a small cairn and I make that my destination. No landmarks are evident as I scan the panorama to the south, simply layers of ridges that seem to go on to infinity. North Yorkshire landscape artist Ian Scott Massie uses a style that closely represents such a view. My thoughts return to Elgee and his memorable description: *This moorland resembles nothing so much as a heaving sea, wave behind wave, swell merging into swell, hollow into hollow*. New technology might identify the riggs from here but, inspired

perhaps by Enid Blyton, I want to let the ethereal mist and mystery of these moors take hold.

Elgee's words are as recognisable today as they were a century ago, for the vista seems the same and its impact just as remarkable. I turn back and realise that the view to the north must be very different from his a century ago, long before Guisborough became a dormitory town. There were steam trains, ubiquitous coal fires and, beyond Eston Moor, heavy industry on the banks of the Tees. There would also be much evidence of local ironstone mining. My walk reignited a deep appreciation of Frank Elgee and others from Teesside who were pioneers in exploring and recording their love of the moors, so near to home yet spectacularly different from their daily environment.

During this walk I used OS Explorer map OL26 1:25,000 (North York Moors Western Area). To find out more about Frank Elgee, please see Albert Elliot's chapter in the NYMA publication *The History Tree* (2018).

JOHN ROBERTS

Photos © John Roberts

BIODIVERSITY

“CORBETT’S COPSE” TEN YEARS ON

THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY declared 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB). This was to be a year-long celebration of biological diversity and its importance. It set out five goals one of which was to encourage individuals, organisations and governments to act immediately to halt biodiversity loss.

By coincidence 2010 was also the 25th anniversary year of the North Yorkshire Moors Association. As a contribution to the Biodiversity Year, NYMA decided to explore the possibility of improving an area of about an acre of land previously identified by Peter Woods as a planting site for the Juniper Regeneration Project. The site is owned by Charles Kidd who for almost forty years was the editor of *Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage*. This patch of land is situated above the top perimeter wall of Danby Park, one of North Yorkshire's old deer parks. In 2010 Charles Kidd was approached about extending the juniper tree planting to include additional

tree planting for wildlife habitat improvement and as a contribution to the International Year of Biodiversity.

Subsequently, a botanical survey was carried out and a plan was produced and approved by the National Park ecologist and woodland officer. About the same time NYMA was contacted by Jane Ainger about the possibility of establishing a suitable memorial for her brother Richard Corbett who died in 2009. Richard loved the North Yorkshire Moors and often stayed at the Westerdale Youth Hostel. Jane and her husband Stephen visited the site in September 2010 and agreed that it was an appropriate quiet location, in sight of Westerdale and a place where Richard would be remembered.

The first task was to reduce the dense bracken which occupied most of the site and this was carried out at the end of August by employing a local approved contractor to spray the bracken with Asulox. In the spring of 2011, a selection

of trees with local provenance were acquired from the Botton tree nursery and generously donated to the project by Alan Ayers. The first trees were planted by Jane's twin brother Charles Corbett in April 2011. Subsequent planting has taken place over the last nine years and further bracken treatment has been required. The latest addition to the site has been the planting of a number of Alder Buckthorn in December 2019.

TOM CHADWICK

Jane and Stephen Ainger by Corbett's Copse in 2010



Photos © Tom Chadwick

BIRD SONG

FOR MANY of us lockdown has meant more time in and around home plus a rather quieter environment. Ideal for looking at and really listening to what goes on around us, and in particular, to the birds.

Bird song is a wonderful and uplifting sound. OK, too much green woodpecker, great tit or even cuckoo (you should be so lucky!) can drive you bonkers, but.....

It's world of different sounds that the majority of people don't tune in to. During walks I've said, "What a lovely song, but what sort of bird is it?" The response tends to be "What song?" Now though, being confined within a restricted sphere, many of us have the opportunity to listen in without the usual background noise of traffic. I warn you though, once you do tune in you'll stay tuned in!

What is the purpose of birdsong? It's all about breeding. Most song is used either to defend a territory or attract a mate, and is a male pastime, and between now and late summer is when it all happens – there is no dawn chorus in winter.

Before you start delving into sound clips and trying to work out who's song you've been listening to, it's helpful to decide whether it's a song or a call; often you need to listen to the right part of the clip to identify the bird concerned. Whilst song is all about breeding, calls are used for all sorts of purposes such as contact within groups, alarms, or calling to offspring. Definitions vary, but songs tend to be complex and melodious, (I stress tend to be....) whilst calls tend to be simpler; both are often repeated. Perhaps the most frequently heard example is the blackbird. Their fluid and varied song is heard all day long, with early morning and late evening being the best times to fix it in your mind, as they tend to be the first and last songsters. Disturb one during the day though, and you will hear a completely different sound – their alarm call is a series of staccato squawks, rather indignant sounding, as they fly away or warn you off. Another call, much heard at the moment, is the sort of clucking they use to round up their fledglings when they have left the nest but are still dependant.

Social species such as sparrows, rooks and goldfinches are among the birds you can hear chattering away to each other – these are contact calls. Some, such as starlings are often rather soothing, almost a sort of coo, whilst sparrow communications in particular rise and fall depending on whether they are just chatting, or getting aggressive!

Finally, if you hear a song, is there a response? Territories usually abut each other, so if one male is proclaiming his ownership, the one(s) next-door is usually having his say too! Chaffinch song is easily identifiable, and carries well, so you can often hear them singing against each other.

There are many websites specialising in bird song; <https://www.british-birdsongs.uk/> is one of the easiest to use. To try it out, use the link and then select e.g. blackbird. Look above the picture on the chosen page, and you'll see three tabs: for song, alarm call and flight call.

Next question – when you hear a bird singing, how do you go about working out what it is??

A repetitive single note could be a great tit (supposedly teacher, teacher) a chattering song which rises at the end could be a chaffinch. A varied song higher-pitched than a blackbird could be a robin (no two phrases are the same) – a wren maybe if it is even higher pitched.

On the assumption that you'll be in your garden when you first tune in, the 10 most reported gardens birds in the BTO's Garden BirdWatch survey are:

- Blue tit
- Woodpigeon
- Blackbird
- Robin
- Great tit
- Dunnock
- House Sparrow
- Goldfinch
- Magpie
- Collared Dove

Start there and see how you get on.....

Another way of adding both interest and purpose to watching the birds in your garden is join the Garden BirdWatch survey and report what you see. To understand what is happening to our birds we need all the data we can gather, and this is the purpose of the Garden BirdWatch. The more we know about our birds, the better our chances of understanding the pressures on them due to climate change and a changing environment. For the duration of lockdown, membership is free, so log on and get counting – you may find it as compelling as I do!

https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/gbw?gclid=EAlaIqobChMI3trVjNTJ6QIVt4BQBh1degBJEAAAYASAAEgKjvD_BwE

MIKE GRAY
GBWMIKE@GMAIL.COM

Photo © Sharon Artley



Dunnock

“JOHN PHILLIPS: YORKSHIRE’S TRAVELLER THROUGH TIME”

BY COLIN SPEAKMAN



COLIN SPEAKMAN has written a fascinating study of the 19th century geologist and polymath John Phillips, aiming to give greater prominence to the innovative topographical work of this remarkable man, who spent much of his working life in Yorkshire.

Born in Wiltshire in 1800, Phillips was to become a pioneer and leading figure in the new disciplines of geology, palaeontology and topography, during a time of great scientific and technological advances. He was one of the greatest field researchers and interpreters of landscape, and probably the most distinguished scientist ever to have lived and worked in York.

It was perhaps inevitable that the young Phillips chose the career path he did when we learn that his uncle was the great geologist, stratigrapher and map-maker William ‘Strata’ Smith, creator of the famous geological map of Britain (1815). John was just eight years old when both his parents died, leaving him and his two siblings orphaned. William Smith stepped forward to take responsibility for the family, and thus began the close relationship between Smith and his nephew that would shape and influence both their lives. John was sent to boarding-school for five years and then spent a year at the home of the Revd. Benjamin Richardson, a friend of Smith’s. Phillips was an intelligent, capable boy who benefited greatly from these placements, in particular from the guidance and prudent counsel of the scientific clergyman.

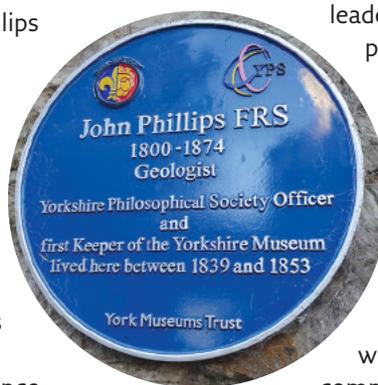
In 1815 John returned to live with his uncle, and so started the close partnership that endured until Smith’s death in 1839. The young man became his mentor’s companion,

colleague, pupil, and amanuensis, giving his rather wayward uncle invaluable assistance, both in his personal and professional life. This support was particularly important after Smith’s imprisonment for bankruptcy in 1819; after his release, the family travelled to Yorkshire with the urgent aim of making a fresh start.

The move had a profound impact on the lives of both men. Together, they spent the first few years on ‘long and laborious wanderings’ in pursuit of employment, carrying out geological surveys and engineering and map-making projects. It is a remarkable testament to Phillips’ hard work and intelligence that within a few years he became a leader in the fields of geology, topography and palaeontology as well as being conversant with many other related sciences. He was also an accomplished draughtsman and artist.

In 1824 Phillips was paid to arrange and catalogue the massive collection of fossils of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society at York. This piece of work was so well received that two years later he was appointed as the Society’s first Keeper of what became the Yorkshire Museum – a fact commemorated on the blue plaque which now adorns St Mary’s Lodge, at the entrance to the Museum Gardens in York, which was Phillips’ main home for the next 30 years.

Phillips and Smith forged valuable relationships with like-minded scientists and intellectuals, both amateur and professional, and were soon invited to give lectures at the learned societies then being established in major cities. By 1826 Phillips was in constant demand as a lecturer and teacher across the north of England and as far afield as



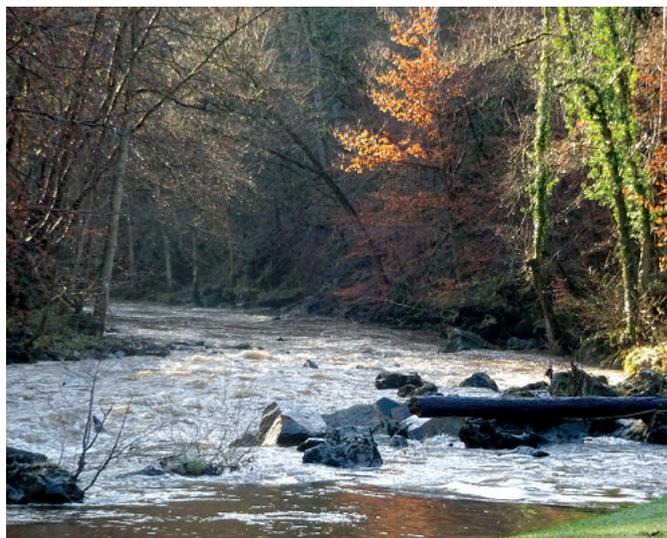
London. All the while, he continued his physically-demanding field trips and surveying excursions in order to expand his knowledge of topography and related sciences. He loved being out in the wide open spaces and varied countryside of Yorkshire. In 1829 he published his first major book, “Illustrations of the Geology of Yorkshire”, a remarkable *tour de force* for someone who had received no formal higher education. An immediate success, this was followed by other publications including “A Guide to Geology” (1834), “Rivers, Mountains and Sea-Coast of Yorkshire” (1853), and even a popular railway guidebook, in addition to numerous academic papers, reports and articles. Speakman’s view is that “Rivers, Mountains and Sea-Coast” is one of the best books ever written about the landscape of Yorkshire, combining scientific facts such as the height of hills and levels of rainfall with passages of lyrical prose and beautiful observation of the natural world. For instance, writing about the River Esk on the approach to Glaisdale, in what is now the North York Moors National Park, Phillips writes:

The river is in fact barred from a direct course by cross ridges of sandstone and shale, through which its deep and winding channel is cut. Through the woods which cover the greater part of the surface the shale peeps out in high dark cliffs, and here and there white crags of gritstone appear on the edge. Often too they lie in huge confusion on the slopes, or make islands in the water, and serve with fallen trees for cheap and primitive bridges. Not a house in this wild, sylvan scene nor a sound save that of the swift Esk breaking into a thousand falls, and running by its own sweet will in many little streams. In autumn the rich hues of decaying foliage are charmingly lit up by the fresh green leaves and bright red berries of the holly.

Phillips was responsible for first using the name ‘Tabular Hills’ for the line of hills running across the North York Moors from Sutton Bank in the west to the coast between Scarborough and Filey. He brought passion and a sense of the uniqueness of place to his understanding of how human and natural interaction shapes the particular character of locations. His enthusiasm and insights, shared through his lectures and writing, have influenced countless subsequent scientists and writers.

After spending nearly 30 productive - though low-paid - years with York as his home base, Phillips’ national reputation was consolidated by the offer of a prestigious position as Reader in Geology at Oxford University in 1853, an honour and opportunity too great to turn down. He set up home in Oxford with his sister Anne, residing there until his death. Professor Phillips remained in close contact with his Yorkshire friends and colleagues and the learned institutions to which he had given so much support and energy, and at his death in 1874 he was still considered such a major figure in York that his body was transported back by train to lie overnight at the York Museum. The Great Bell of the Minster tolled before his funeral, and he is buried in York Cemetery.

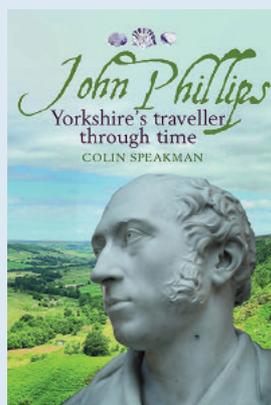
Throughout this readable and scholarly book, Colin Speakman highlights the remarkable scientific and academic achievements of Phillips. What also springs from each page is the author’s respect for his subject. We learn that as well



as a being endowed with a brilliant scientific mind and amazing physical stamina, John Phillips had a host of personal qualities that endeared him to all who met him: a first-hand observer recalls “his kind and genial face, his winning and encouraging smile, the ever-ready and wise words with which he brightened and enlivened the most perplexing question and the deep knowledge which lay below and prompted all his observations”.

The book is garnished with photos, illustrations, diagrams and maps which complement and reinforce the text. Peopled with a host of scientific personalities and characters of the times and packed with absorbing detail, this informative book is a satisfying and entertaining read that will go a long way to giving due recognition to the influential legacy of one of our finest outdoor writers and scientists, John Phillips, an extraordinary traveller through time.

ALBERT ELLIOTT AND JANET COCHRANE



John Phillips, Yorkshire’s traveller through time by Colin Speakman, 192 page softback, published by Gritstone Publishing Cooperative, www.gritstonecoop.co.uk. Price £15. ISBN 978-0-9955609-8-7

Colin has kindly offered to make a donation of £2 to NYMA for every copy of the book sold to one of our members. Please put ‘NYMA’ after your name when ordering the book online via Gritstone Coop so this can be recorded (or feel free to order your copy via secretary@nyma.org.uk).

THE LOCKDOWN EXPERIENCE

DURING LOCKDOWN, it has been important to find ways to manage time positively and constructively to preserve one's well being both physically and mentally. Living on the Moors and having a passion for photography has meant that although I have been very much restricted to the back (or front gardens), I have

really valued the time, the quiet and the opportunities to go outside, not be disturbed by traffic noise, to *really* listen to birdsong and, if I am lucky, grab a decent shot or two of what the natural world and the whole world on my doorstep has to offer.

EDITOR

Photo © Sharon Artley





SKYLARKS

Hello Skylarks, since last the last issue of this magazine, you have probably been off school for a while and doing lots of lessons at home and learning new things. Wherever you live you may have noticed differences in your **environment**. As you know environment means everything around us, living and non-living.



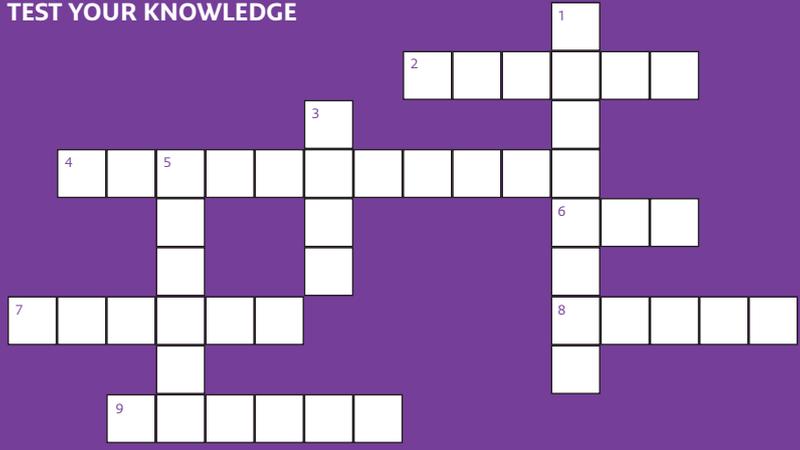
Since we have needed to stay at home and make sure that we **social distance**, to keep us safe and healthy, things have changed. Have you noticed the sky? There are hardly any aeroplanes which produce **vapour trails**.



There is less noisy traffic on the roads and you can hear more bird **song**. The air is cleaner when you breathe deeply. A sign of **clean air** is the development of lichen on trees.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

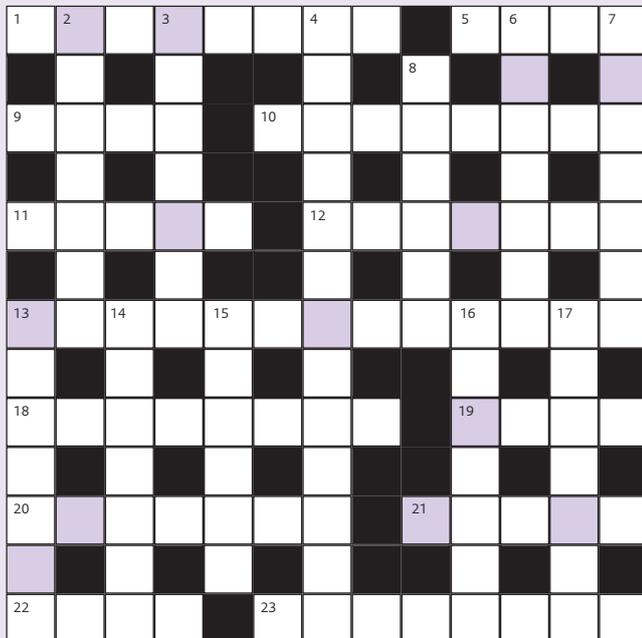


- 2 across & 1 down** - A way of keeping apart to keep us safe and healthy (6, 8)
- 3 down** - Something that a bird sings (4)
- 4 across** - Everything around us (11)
- 5 down & 9 across** - Aeroplanes produce these (6,6)
- 6 across** (see 8 across)
- 7 across** - a place where you normally have lessons (6)
- 8 & 6 across** - Lichen grows well when we have this (5,3)

Lichen: <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/914821> Photo © Lairich Rig (cc-by-sa/2.0)
 Vapour trail: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0e/Vapour_trails.jpg
 Wren singing: <https://pixabay.com/photos/wren-bird-singing-springtime-clute-411859/>

We enjoy including your pictures, stories and news, please keep sending them to editor@nyma.org.uk

CROSSWORD 89 BY AMANUENSIS



Take the letters from the coloured squares in the grid and rearrange in the boxes to solve the anagram.
 Clue: Beauty spot at the seaside for outlaws brown horse perhaps? (5, 5, 3)

ACROSS

- 1 Abandoned medieval village has ringed pattern on huge weight (8)
- 6 Tribal dance contains no waves? (4)
- 9 Soon to have unknown attribution (4)
- 10 Killer holds two foolish people at home (8)
- 11 Claw is all that's left after the deal (5)
- 12 Restricts the provisions (7)
- 13 Hidden lists maybe? (6, 7)
- 18 Small space that leads to a bigger one (4-4)
- 19 The oldest lifeboat builder? (4)
- 20 Having this may result in guilty verdict (2, 5)
- 21 Evil spirit at the heart of crude monster (5)
- 22 Call out for year old measure (4)
- 23 She has water all around her (8)

DOWN

- 2 Legendary valley near Loftus where worker goes on the beer (7)
- 3 Biafran courage but full of spite (7)
- 4 Lots of stars can be seen at these (13)
- 6 Flee from punishment perhaps? (7)
- 7 They are in a line of powerful rulers (7)
- 8 Fortified building where actors join the French (6)
- 13 A country youth near to local village (7)
- 14 Expresses disapproval of female ring (7)
- 15 Insect hearing organ on rug (6)
- 16 Grandma is eager to produce cotton fabric (7)
- 17 Marine mollusc sailor has with no one else (7)

Answers on back cover

NYMA NEWS

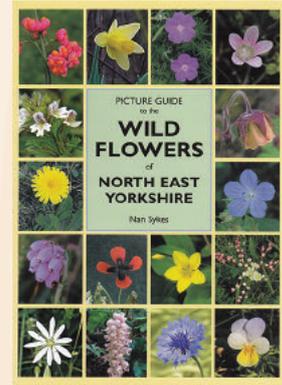
WE'RE looking forward to a gradual return to normality as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, but it'll be a long time before we can resume all our usual activities. For NYMA – as for so many organisations – we've gone through a steep learning curve as we do more online. In April we held our first Council meeting by video-conference, and we've also participated in online meetings with our colleagues from other national parks through the Campaign for National Parks (the umbrella body for National Park Societies).

Unfortunately of course we can't do everything online, and we've had to cancel our regular monthly programme of walks and other events. The AGM has also been a casualty of the virus, as it was due in early June, but a replacement event will be held on Tuesday September 8 by video-conference (see AGM notice below). We have also taken the difficult decision to cancel the National Park Societies conference which NYMA was hosting at the Cober Hill Hotel, Cloughton, in October. Planning was well advanced for the conference with an excellent line-up of speakers and field trips, but although restrictions are gradually being lifted, it seems unlikely that an event of this type can be held safely this year. The current plan (agreed with CNP) is to hold the conference in October 2021.

Early in March – just before lockdown – we were able to run a field trip for students from the Responsible Tourism Management MSc course at Leeds Beckett University. Accompanied by their course leader Dr Davina Stanford, an international group of students came to Kirkbymoorside to listen to talks on MoorsBus, volunteering in the National Park and the Ryedale Cycle Forum, before heading off for lunch at the Blacksmith's Arms in Lastingham, which specialises in using local produce in its dishes. The afternoon was taken up by a tour of Spaunton Moor to learn about the contribution of grouse-shooting to the local economy.

We're delighted that the 'Picture Guide to the Wild Flowers of North East Yorkshire', by botanist and author Nan Sykes, has been re-published as a facsimile edition – the book was out of print and copies were very hard to come by. The 'Picture Guide' is a compilation of photos and descriptions of the 700 or so native species of flowering plant found in our area organized according to family, with a description of the habitats where the plants can be found, and flower identification charts. A handy size for a field-guide, the book was originally published in 2008 by the National Park but the files were lost, so this version was

scanned in its entirety by Nan herself before her sad death earlier this year. The charity PLACE, which promotes research into the people, landscape and culture of Yorkshire, has published the book with minor updates. NYMA gave financial support to the project and is distributing the majority of copies. Books cost £11.50 inc. P&P (UK only) and can be ordered by emailing secretary@nyma.org.uk. It's just the job for local walks and staycations!



AGM NOTICE

The Annual General Meeting of the North Yorkshire Moors Association will take place on Tuesday 8 September 2020, starting at 2.30. The meeting will take place by video-conference. To take part, please contact Janet Cochrane on secretary@nyma.org.uk.

NYMA WALKS

In view of the current Coronavirus situation, NYMA will not be organising any walks until further notice.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS (see page 17)

ROBIN HOOD'S BAY

Anagram

14 catcall, 15 earwig, 16 nankeen, 17 abalone
9 abscond, 7 dynasts, 8 castle, 13 Swainby,
2 Handale, 3 rancour, 4 observatories,

Down

21 demon, 22 yell, 23 islander
18 ante-room, 19 Noah, 20 no allibi,
11 talon, 13 secret agendas,
1 Whorton, 5 bald, 9 anon, 10 assassin,

Across

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Ian Carstairs OBE

Chairman

Tom Chadwick

Vice Chairman

Adrian Leaman

Council Members

Ray Clarke, Janet Cochrane, Albert Elliot, Ann Glass, Cal Moore, Dave Moore, Colin Speakman, George Winn-Darley, Elaine Wisdom

Association Treasurer

Brian Pearce – brian.pearce11@btinternet.com

Association Secretary

Janet Cochrane – secretary@nyma.org.uk – 07570 112010

Membership Secretary

Cal Moore – membership@nyma.org.uk – 01287 669648

Walks Coordinator

Heather Mather – 01287 669104

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