VOICE OF THE MOORS

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

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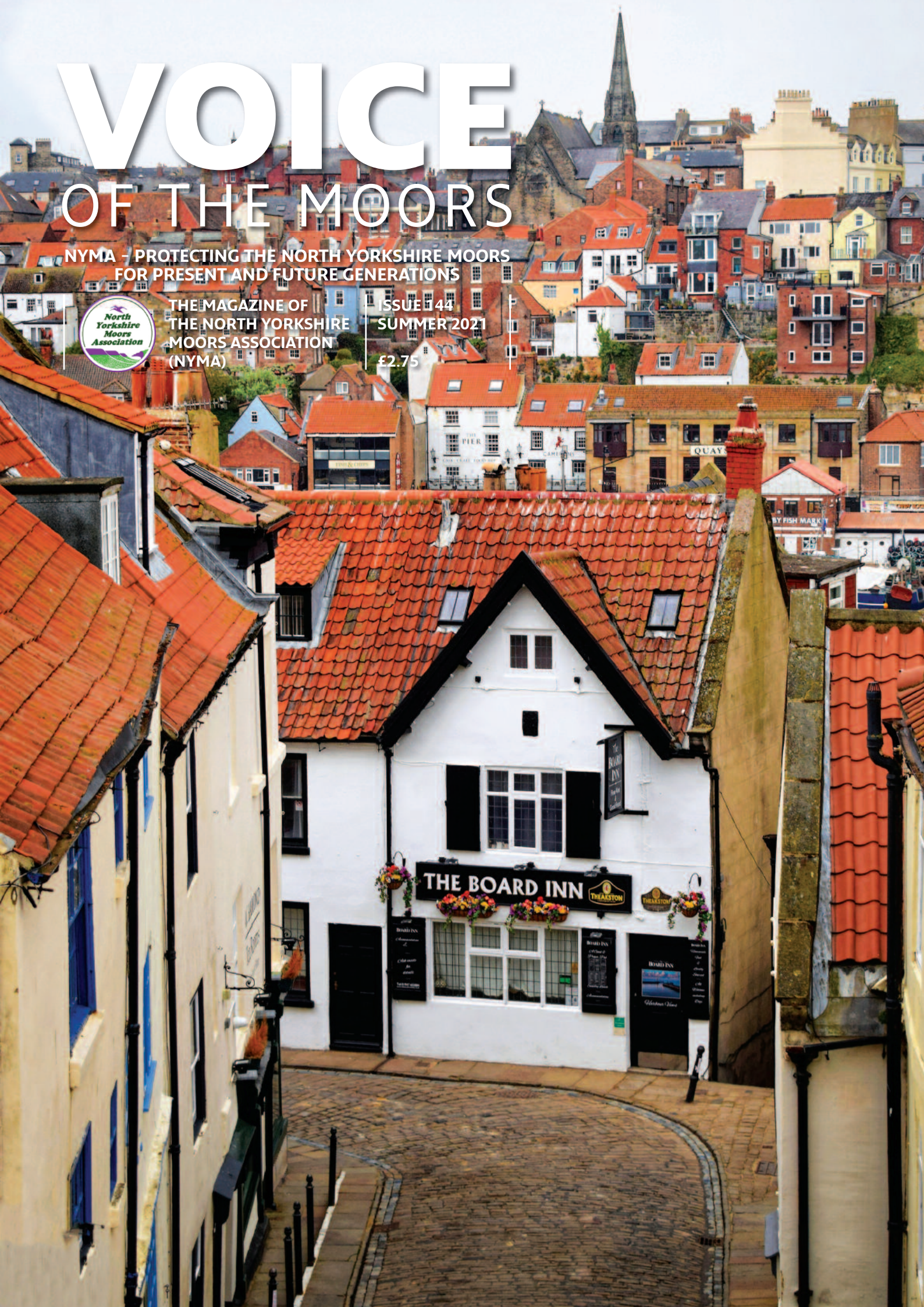

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Cover: Looking over Whitby from Church Lane © Kelly Holmes

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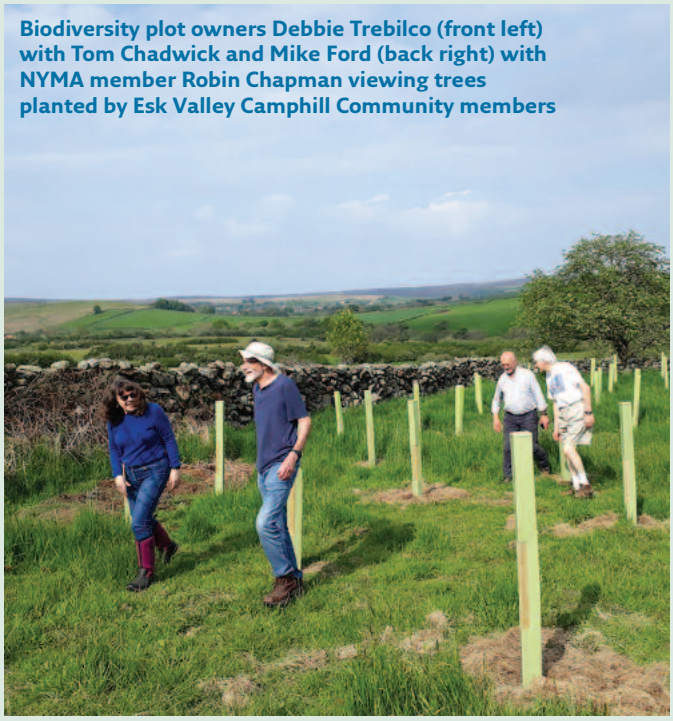
CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

NYMA has continued to function within Covid-19 restrictions, including holding our Council meetings online. Other virtual meetings we have taken part in include a Defra workshop relating to the Glover Review, consultation for renewal of the North York Moors National Park management plan, and Campaign for National Park meetings. These last have covered a proposed new way of managing tourism in the heart of Snowdonia, where visitor numbers threaten to overwhelm the tranquillity and natural beauty of the national park, and a presentation on national park visitor behaviour generally, relating to the huge influx of visitors to popular sites – often accompanied by poor behaviour such as littering, invading private land, and letting dogs chase sheep and wildlife. It was a pleasant change to be able to join face-to-face (but socially distanced) meetings more recently in Park Wood, Castleton, with proponents of a conservation work scheme; another at Sutton Bank to discuss our involvement with the Battle of Byland 800th anniversary in 2022; and one near Danby, to see biodiversity work on private land by the recipients of a NYMA Conservation Award (see also NYMA News).



Biodiversity plot owners Debbie Trebilco (front left) with Tom Chadwick and Mike Ford (back right) with NYMA member Robin Chapman viewing trees planted by Esk Valley Camphill Community members

Photo © Janet Cochrane

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The work which we started over ten years ago on a plot of land above the ancient deer park known as Park Wood, between Castleton and Danby, was a response to the UN International Year of Biodiversity in 2010. The Year's main goals were to enhance public awareness of the importance of conserving biodiversity and make people aware of threats to it. Our bracken-clearing and tree-planting represent a small contribution towards these ends by helping to create better and more diverse wildlife habitat.

The UN Convention for Biological Diversity came into force in 1993 following the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The objective was to develop national strategies for the conservation

and sustainable use of biodiversity. Subsequently, the International Day for Biological Diversity has been celebrated annually on May 22nd. Last year the theme was 'Our solutions are in nature', recognising that despite technological advances, humanity is completely dependent on a healthy and vibrant ecosystem. This year the slogan was 'We are part of the solution': in other words, each and every one of us can make a contribution - however small - to helping nature recover.

GOVERNMENT ACTION

On May 18th the Government announced a legally binding species target for 2030 aimed at halting the decline of nature and wildlife. This will be included in the Environment Bill which is presently passing through Parliament. The Environment Secretary, George Eustice, said: "This is a huge step forward, and a world-leading measure in the year of COP15 and COP26 as we build back greener from the pandemic. We hope that this will be the Net Zero equivalent for nature, spurring action of the scale required to address the biodiversity crisis." (COP15 is the UN Biodiversity Convention to be held in China in October 2021, and COP26 is the UN Climate Change Conference to be held in Glasgow in November 2021.)

SO WHAT IS THE BIODIVERSITY CRISIS?

The Biodiversity Intactness Index adopted by the UN Convention of Biodiversity shows the UK at the bottom of the G7 countries and third from the bottom of all European countries, with only 50% of our biodiversity still intact, in contrast to Canada and Finland where almost 90% is still intact. According to the WWF's State of Nature Report 2020, 26% of our mammals are threatened with extinction, while hedgehogs have declined by 95% since the 1950s, the population of Turtle Doves has crashed by 98%, and the Common Toad by 68%. The damage caused by atmospheric pollution in the form of acid rain has affected our moorland, with lasting harm to the streams which run from large catchment areas within the National Park; the headwaters of some are all but devoid of aquatic invertebrates.

At a local level we know from our involvement with the North York Moors' Cornfield Flowers Project that one reason for the loss of biodiversity is the change in farming practices since the end of the Second World War. The botanist Nan Sykes found in the 1980s that arable plant flora had all but disappeared from land used to grow crops within the National Park. The nationally recognised Cornfield Flowers Project sprang from this revelation. The team of people who began rescuing the disappearing plants embody the 2021 Biodiversity Day slogan: 'We are part of the solution' by demonstrating that individuals with dedication and will can make a difference, and that agricultural practices can be inclusive of nature.

THE DASGUPTA REVIEW

The urgency of addressing biodiversity issues is spelled out in a remarkable review commissioned in 2019 by Philip Hammond (then Chancellor of the Exchequer) and published earlier this year. 'The Economics of Biodiversity: the Dasgupta Review' contends that the value of nature can no longer be absent from

Wildflower meadow above Robin Hood's Bay

national finances, and it is significant in underpinning the Government's forthcoming Environment Bill.

In his foreword, Sir David Attenborough writes: "We are facing a global crisis. We are totally dependent upon the natural world. It supplies us with every oxygen-laden breath we take and every mouthful of food we eat. But we are currently damaging it so profoundly that many of its natural systems are now on the verge of breakdown." He concludes: "Economics is a discipline that shapes decisions of the utmost consequence, and so matters to us all. The Dasgupta Review at last puts biodiversity at its core and provides the compass that we urgently need. In doing so, it shows us how, by bringing economics and ecology together, we can help save the natural world at what might be the last minute - and in doing so save ourselves".

END PIECE

In the Spring issue of 'Voice' I mentioned the 'Frogfest' at Botton Pond, and I am pleased to say that during the week of 8-14 March they returned again within the two-week period which has marked their arrival for the last 20 years. May was notable as the wettest in our 30-year record of rainfall in the Upper Esk Valley; we measured 159.5 mm (compared to the 30-year average for May of 53.3 mm). But despite the cold and wet weather, while out running in May I saw four Slow-worms, three of them very much alive and one the victim of a road kill. I have also heard but not seen four cuckoos in different locations, far enough apart to suggest that these were four individuals.

Vive la Biodiversité!

TOM CHADWICK

THE SPEEDWELLS – VERONICAS


V. chamaedrys


V. arvensis


V. hederifolia

Photos © Nan Sykes

TRUE blue flowers readily catch the eye when we are out walking in the countryside. We are used to the delights of massed bluebells, but others are not so obviously abundant. Yet all the most common speedwells have blue flowers, from bright and deep to pale; perhaps not as spectacular as bluebells but more delicately beautiful, needing a closer look - though when occasionally seen 'en masse' they are bluebells' equal.

The speedwells, or veronicas, belong to the Veronicaceae family and are small plants, often creeping, both annuals and perennials. They have, with a few rare exceptions, blue flowers of four unequal petals that are joined at their bases round two prominent stamens. These flowers are in spikes, either terminal, growing more loosely from the leaf-bases, or solitary on stalks from these; they all have opposite, whole, but toothed or notched leaves. The various species have adapted to take advantage of a number of different habitats, mostly dry land, in sun or shade, in disturbed or more permanently grassy places, with a few preferring wet, boggy areas. Some are annual while others are perennial, with most flowering from late spring through summer. Most are native plants but a few have been introduced and become naturalised, all showing their versatility as a species.

A VARIETY OF HABITATS

The commonest of those preferring wetter conditions, being found in shallow streams, ponds and bogs, is the Brooklime (*V. beccabunga*), a sprawling perennial with spikes of bright blue flowers up the stems and shiny, fleshy leaves. Three rarer ones of marshy areas are the Marsh Speedwell and the Pink and Blue Water Speedwells, tall upright perennials with pointed leaves.

Three other perennial species with a similar flowering arrangement that are quite common in dry, short grassy areas or open woodland are Germander (*V. chamaedrys*), Wood Speedwell (*V. montana*), and Heath Speedwell (*V. officinalis*). The flowers of the more widespread and noticeable Germander Speedwell are very recognisable, being bright blue with a white central 'eye'.

Two members of the family with terminal spikes of flowers are the Thyme-leaved Speedwell (*V. serpylifolia*) and the Wall Speedwell (*V. arvensis*), the former a perennial of bare, heathy ground and the latter an annual of bare, dry, stony soils, its tiny bright blue flowers all but hidden in its top leaves.

Other speedwells have solitary stalked flowers up their stems, such as the Common Field Speedwell (*V. persica*) with its blue veined petals, the lower often very pale. This is an abundant annual of arable and disturbed land and, like the rarer but similar green and grey Field Speedwell, is an established alien, as is the perennial Slender Speedwell (*V. filiformis*). The much smaller and widespread Ivy-leaved Speedwell (*V. hederifolia*), of disturbed land and hedgerows, is an annual, a native with minute pale blue flowers.

So the speedwells are quite a 'mixed bunch'. All close their blue flowers in wet conditions, however, when they can self-pollinate - though usually they are pollinated by flies.

SPEEDWELLS IN FOLKLORE

In folklore, the speedwells were said to be effective against spells and fairy influences – this usually referred to the most common Germander. The flowers were thought to represent St. Veronica's handkerchief, with which she wiped Christ's brow on his way to the cross, hence the names 'veronica' and 'speedwell'. Other sources say that the name 'speedwell' comes from it being a roadside plant that was sewn into travellers' clothes to protect and speed them safely on their way. The bright blue, white-centred 'eye' of the germander has given rise to the name 'birds' eyes' or 'angel eyes', and as the flowers fall so easily when touched, to the names 'farewell and goodbye' and 'speedwell'.

The plant is one of the seven Irish 'Herbs of the Seven Cures'; not only giving protection against the evil eye but with healing powers too. All the speedwells have an astringent bitterness which was utilised in a number of remedies: to stimulate the appetite, or the kidneys to cleanse the blood, and for dysentery, wound healing and skin problems, especially itching, rashes and ulcers. It was reputed to remove excess mucus in coughs, catarrh and bronchial troubles, to heal and sooth internally. Brooklime was eaten as a salad, often with watercress. It is antiscorbutic (i.e. useful in preventing scurvy) but bitter – in fact its Latin name 'beccabunga' means 'mouth smart'.

So, in the past, the speedwells were greatly used medicinally, but they fell out of favour and are now rarely used. Maybe therefore we can just be glad of their bright blue flowers to cheer us on our way!

ANNE PRESS

MOORLANDS BIRDS: THE LAPWING

LAPWINGS are easy to spot, with their iridescent greenish upper feathers, large black and white wings, white undersides and wispy green crest. Their often rather lazy flight pattern is enhanced in spring, when the male shows off with a superb display of diving, twisting and turning in the air. Their distinctive 'peeee-wit' call gives them their common name, Peewit.

Feeding mainly on insects and their larvae, they can be seen stamping their feet on the ground to encourage their prey to the surface. Worms, spiders, and some seeds and grain also form part of their diet, for which their short, straight beak is well adapted.

Lapwings start pairing up in late March with the female laying 3 or 4 eggs in a nest on the ground, which the male especially defends fiercely. They also use distraction as a defence by pretending to be injured to entice a predator away from the nest, something you may well see when out walking near a nesting site. Look out for this behaviour, particularly if you have a dog with you that is off its lead.

At the end of the breeding season Lapwings group together in flocks of hundreds or even thousands. (If you want a challenge, try counting 2,000 or so Lapwings, mixed with assorted other waders, on mud flats 250m away. You only need a raptor or a dog walker passing by...!) Some birds will only move a short distance to lower, more sheltered ground for the winter, whilst others will migrate further south, maybe to France or Spain. Lapwings that have spent the breeding season in northern Europe may, in turn, winter in Britain, so on lower ground you can see them all year round.

POPULATION DECLINE

Up until the 1980s, these charismatic birds were to be found nesting on most farms throughout the country. Since then, though, their population has fallen dramatically, and they are now 'red listed' as birds of conservation concern in the UK and as 'vulnerable' in Europe generally. There are now only around 200,000 breeding pairs of Lapwings in Britain and it is estimated that around 3,000 of them nest on moors and farmland in the North York Moors.

There is good evidence that these declines have resulted from habitat loss and degradation due to changes in agricultural practices, particularly the move to autumn sowing, which results in a taller crop in spring that is not a suitable habitat for breeding waders. Drainage of grasslands and the loss of mixed farmland have added to their woes, as has the use of crop pesticides, which has reduced the number of insects available for them to eat. The result has been a drop in breeding productivity below a sustainable level, with chick mortality being a significant factor. Lapwing chicks are able to run around and feed themselves within a day of hatching. They are closely guarded by their mother who will lead them to the best feeding sites, often some distance away from the nesting site, when they are particularly vulnerable to predators. The five-week period between hatching and fledging is a critical stage for young chicks and many don't make it to adulthood.

Photos © Sharon Artley

MANAGING MOORLAND HABITAT

In summary, Lapwings have some quite specific requirements for successful breeding:

- Short, yet diverse grass structure
- Damp, preferably unimproved, pastures to probe for earthworms
- Some taller tussocks for chicks to hide amongst
- Small wet pools for chick feeding
- Protection from predators

So, to give the chicks the best chance of fledging and returning to the same fields to breed, it is important to ensure that both moors and farmland provide food, shelter and as safe an environment as possible for adult birds and their chicks. However, continued changes in land use policy which reduce the amount of suitable breeding habitat, plus an associated increase in predation, threaten these important upland breeding populations. An appropriate conservation framework is needed with sufficient funding to ensure that the habitat on and adjacent to moorlands is appropriately managed.

There is much debate over driven grouse shooting and the effect of moorland management on the many species that inhabit these vital uplands. Whilst predator control seems to benefit ground-nesting birds such as Lapwings, plovers and Curlew, other important and ever rarer species such as Meadow Pipits, Skylarks and Whinchat have been adversely affected, and it is vital that a strong evidence-base is used in decision-making and policy formation, so that the overall effects of moorland practices are carefully thought through.

MIKE GRAY

FRITILLARIES IN THE NORTH YORK MOORS

Pearl-bordered Fritillary (left) and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (right), showing the difference between the underwings.

PERHAPS two of our most beautiful butterflies are the closely-related Pearl-bordered and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries, both of which can be found within our National Park. They are extremely similar in appearance, having bright orange upperwings with black chequering, whilst the underside of the wings is reminiscent of stained-glass, with both species having a row of shining 'pearls' along the edge of the hindwing, from which they take their names. Despite the similarities, with close observation it is possible to tell them apart. If you are able to get a view of the underwings, look at the row of 'pearls' along the edge; in the Pearl-bordered Fritillary the chevrons that border these are red, whereas in the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary they are black. Overall, the underwing is far more reddish in appearance in the Pearl-bordered, with the Small Pearl-bordered having more black.

In practice, any small fritillary seen is likely to be the Small Pearl-bordered, especially throughout June. Two other fritillaries can be found in the National Park: the Dark Green and the Silver-washed. These are both larger and more powerful flyers than the Pearl-bordered and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries.

The Pearl-bordered Fritillary has the unfortunate distinction of being Yorkshire's rarest butterfly, and is currently found on only three sites in the Kirkbymoorside area. The sites have a mixture of scrub and grassland, with abundant violets on which the butterfly lays its eggs. The presence of bracken at these sites is also crucial, as the bracken litter warms up faster in the spring than the surrounding grassland. This allows the caterpillars to become active earlier in the year, feeding up on violet leaves before turning into a chrysalis. The butterflies start to emerge in late April, and are most numerous throughout May. They frequently bask on the ground or on bracken litter, and visit the flowers of bugle and dandelion for nectar. In cooler weather they often roost on the unfurling bracken tips, where they are surprisingly well-camouflaged despite their bright colouration.

The Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary is far more widespread, although it still can't be considered a common species. It is most numerous in the south-east of the National Park, but it has recently been found in the western part and it appears to be spreading into the northern regions too. Its habitat requirements are different to the Pearl-bordered, being more commonly found in damper areas, such as beck valleys, bogs, mires, and damp grassland. Like its close relative, it requires abundant violets on which to lay its eggs. It flies later in the year than the Pearl-bordered, usually appearing in late May, becoming most abundant throughout June and continuing into July. Rarely, if weather conditions are suitable there may be a second generation, with adults emerging in August. They will visit a range of flowers for nectar, with Marsh Thistle in particular seeming to be a favourite.

There are several places where this butterfly may be seen: the Hole of Horcum is a good site, with butterflies often on the roadside verge opposite the carpark at Saltersgate. Elsewhere, it can be numerous at Fen Bog and Ellerbeck, off the A169 near RAF Fylingdales; at Wheeldale Gill, Jugger Howe Beck, May Beck, and at various sites within Dalby, Cropton, and Broxa Forests. Due to its northwards spread it is also now found at the eastern end of Scaling Dam Reservoir, and in 2020 it was found for the first time near Commondale, indicating that it is continuing to increase its range. It was also found in 2020 at a single site near Hawnby; only the second time it has been found in this area, and further searches are planned in 2021 in areas of suitable habitat to determine how many other colonies are present.

DAVE O'BRIEN

Pearl-bordered Fritillary

To help protect these and other Yorkshire butterflies, why not become a member of Butterfly Conservation? It is the UK's main charity concerned with the conservation of our butterflies and moths. The Yorkshire Branch offers many opportunities to get actively involved, such as habitat management work parties, a recording scheme, and helping out with events. The website https://www.yorkshirebutterflies.org.uk/home has information on each Yorkshire species, details of sites to visit, and an interactive atlas for each butterfly.

PRESIDENT'S PIECE

MAGICAL MOORS MOMENTS NUMBER 6

IN OUR society, obsessed as it is with anniversaries, one slipped by recently - the seventieth of the founding of the Peak District, Britain's first National Park - which barely made the news.

Through the dire months of lockdown, the long-term importance of nature, the countryside and our National Parks to public health and well-being could not have been more clear.

This set me thinking: it's about time we had a festival to properly celebrate these exceptional places. An occasion to reinforce their role, the paramount need to look after them and those who farm the land, to protect and use them wisely, for their own sake, as well as for all our sanities. And to remind those at all levels who make decisions affecting them that we expect deeds behind the fine words of support if their words mean anything at all.

Indeed, there was such a festival. In the late 1980s, before the Countryside Commission disappeared into an emaciated Natural England, the Commission - along with all the National Parks - turned on their collective imagination to run the 'Watch Over the National Parks' campaign to drive home a firm message.

Having worked on the campaign, I saw first-hand what can be achieved when staff shed the dead hand of bureaucracy and put their collective feet on the accelerator. For that moment, they led the way, bringing a unique sense of common purpose to the 'National Park family'.

Over two years, there were launches, events, competitions, exhibitions and a grand finale Festival of National Parks hosted by the Peak District at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire. It was good. It was actually *very* good. It succeeded because the right people were in the right place at the right time, including long-time friend and indefatigable advocate for the national park movement, and then Peak Information Officer, Roly Smith, to name just one of many.

I held responsibility for organising 'Ribbon Routes' - a week-long labyrinth of journeys and photo-calls by representatives of each Park to deliver a shared message in 90 major towns and cities across the country, before homing in on a street procession with schools in the centre of Birmingham; and then on to Chatsworth House for Festival Day.

Together we enjoyed many idiosyncratic themes and moments. For example, the Moors staff embarked on their 'ribbon' from the centre of Rievaulx Abbey dressed as monks and a nun, pulling a wheeled sheep with a distinctly unnerving and slightly malevolent look in its eye as they weaved their circuitous route to Birmingham. And the optimistic representative from the Northumberland Park who set off to run their route dressed as a curlew, only to realise quickly he wasn't going to get very far dressed like that. At the Festival, Snowdonia sent a steam locomotive from their railway which rather upstaged everyone else.

Then, to top it all, twinned with a national hot-air ballooning event, the Festival sky filled with the multi-coloured bubbling-up of scores of hot air balloons in a simultaneous launch, honoured by the presence of the late Diana, Princess of Wales. To mark her visit, the Park presented her Royal Highness with a pair of locally-knitted Campaign jumpers for Princes William and Harry.

Hot-air balloons lift off from Chatsworth

Street procession in Birmingham

Photos © Ian Carstairs

So, to conclude my series of personal magical moments, I have no doubt that this event for all National Parks must rate the most memorable of all. But it was a close-run thing. The event was planned for a Saturday in mid-September, the same day as the Finningley Battle of Britain Air Display. This raised a question as to whether there would be any conflicts for the balloonists. I suggested to Roly that he should change it to the Sunday, just in case. What a good job he did! Saturday saw a day-long deluge, whereas Sunday dawned a beautiful day - if soggy underfoot.

And the crowds came, though I understand it took Snowdonia a week to get their bogged-down long-loader carrying the locomotive out of the grounds!

Roly's words afterwards have long rung in my ears. "Ian, it was truly wonderful, but it will never happen again", and nor has it. Well, as we emerge from lockdowns and reshape society, make new connections, do things differently – hopefully better – and place even greater value on our countryside and its wildlife, it *can* happen again. It would be an extremely good use of Heritage Fund money to engage more people with our most fundamental heritage of all: what about it?

IAN CARSTAIRS

THE HILLS ARE ALIVE ...

The annual North York Moors Chamber Music Festival has run every year since 2009 and brings world-class music and joy to rural venues across the Moors. Despite the pandemic, the festival went ahead in 2020 - and is scheduled for 2021 too. Jamie Walton is founder and artistic director.

IT'S BEEN a tumultuous year, to put it mildly, one which we would all like to forget I suspect. An intractable force of nature has challenged every one of us in ways we could never have imagined.

Yet one of the advantages to recent lockdowns has been the time to appreciate and observe the landscape and nature around us, inevitably with a new perspective. This can be quite profound, because as you discover more about your surroundings through a different lens, you naturally apply this perspective to all aspects of your life and the people around you. This for me has been a real touchstone, a reassuring hand which has led to new paths and brought me closer to our moorland landscape and the people within it. It is this that has underpinned my personal response to the last year.

As an inherent optimist, I was determined back in March 2020 to see positives which, when you live on the North York Moors, come naturally. That said, there were immediate logistical headaches. We were just about to embark on the construction phase of a new recording studio (Ayriel Studios) on the moors, whilst our chamber music festival (www.northyork moorsfestival.com) was already in the diary for August.

As uncertainty set in last spring and events were being cancelled, I made it my mission to stay focussed and plan ambitiously. For one thing I had a duty to the good folk of Yorkshire looking forward to a summer of music (as well as musicians depending on work). I also had a time-limited EU-funded LEADER award for the recording studio - and we'd reached a point where everyone involved in its design and construction was ready to go. There was work to do.

FOUR CHALLENGES

So, these were the four main challenges: forge ahead with the festival to live audiences as planned; build Ayriel Studios despite the pandemic; walk 2,500 miles in a year in order to remain mentally and physically healthy; and prepare for a recording of the Bach Cello Suites. Needless to say, they have all been a welcome distraction!

The walking target was the easy one and while clocking up around 50 miles a week, my partner and I discovered many areas within the National Park hitherto unknown to us. Not only do we feel better for this (somewhat extreme) routine, but an appreciation of our breathtakingly beautiful region has intensified further.

Ayriel Studios, situated within the panoramic setting of Westerdale, was potentially more of an obstacle - but there's nothing like a grant deadline to focus the creative spirit. The urgency to empty two large barns on a farm (belonging to good friends) was obvious from the get-go, with a race against time to complete the final build before Britain left the EU. If we fell behind schedule we risked losing the essential backing, and as both control room and live studio were to be fully soundproofed with state-of-the-art technology, this was never going to be an easy ride. Despite a bad winter and inevitable setbacks, we miraculously managed just to complete in time and look forward to launching later in the year. This is just the kind of good news story we all need right now – a message of triumph over adversity.

The Herculean efforts of the studio's owners cannot be underestimated as we hurtled towards the daunting deadline with so little 'wriggle room'. I will test out this stunning new space by recording the Bach Suites in July and rehearsing there for the Chamber Music Festival. This will all help develop the brand, website and narrative for Ayriel Studios, a facility which will be open to all genres of music, perhaps encouraging and expanding the local folk music tradition so renowned in these parts.

An even greater stumbling block emerged last August and I'm

Photo © Paul Ingram

Jamie Walton

Photo © Matthew Johnson

wiping a few beads of sweat away just thinking about it. I was determined that while there was even a slim possibility of holding a live music festival, we shouldn't cancel. Social distancing requirements presented an immediate capacity and viability challenge. Add into that government U-turns and ever-shifting rules and travel restrictions, and you can see why trying to plan was a logistical nightmare. I observed in horror as festivals and events throughout the world were forced to quit, leaving many people out of work and a traumatised public without the solace of culture. I chatted with many locals during our long walks and their message was clear: we *need* something to look forward to, an experience to uplift the spirit. Artists were also in tears whilst out of work with hardly any support We simply *had* to find a way through.

Our moorland churches – always so helpful in normal times - were (and still are) understandably nervous about allowing in audiences and were simply mothballed. What to do when you've already sold tickets for all ten concerts, having launched back in November 2019? *'Hang in there'* was our message – although at that stage we weren't sure *where* we were to perform, let alone how. Furthermore, colleagues were flying in from various continents, and as August loomed, the prospect of only permitting gatherings of 30 or less also threatened to scupper our slim chances. We had to be fearless and confident.

AN INGENIOUS SOLUTION

Holding our nerve did pay off, however. Nine days before the festival's launch we announced that we had found a legal solution by hiring in a very large (5000 sq. ft.) marquee and erecting it on the (business) ground of some kind supporters near Kirkbymoorside. Each concert could now go ahead without compromise to socially distanced audiences of up to 200 a time. This solution was ingenious as we could adapt the marquee into a legal 'outdoor' space if needed – and we did need it. The week before all this the brakes on the easing of restrictions were applied; if we had been in an indoor venue we'd have lost the first week. The potential sound issue was resolved by importing a wooden floor and constructing 13 acoustic panels, covered with stunning coastline imagery by photographer Paul Ingram.

The grand piano, generously lent to us, was installed, after which beaming musicians and helpers began to arrive. Various kitchens started producing enormous amounts of delicious food from a fantastic team of tireless volunteers. So far, so good.

Audiences also felt reassured because of the space around them, not just during concerts but within the exquisite grounds of Welburn Manor. Fogging machines and 'track & trace' aside, it felt like a normal festival, and it was an exceptional tonic for everyone, if a little emotional. The *Quartetto di Cremona* flew over from Italy (of all places at that time!) to launch what became two weeks of sheer joy and revelation. And someone was looking down upon us because during that first week, when we were obliged to remain legally 'outdoors', the UK was blessed with a heatwave. It was meant to be!

The commitment from the artists was extraordinary, their playing intensified by months of frustration and bewilderment finding release and expression through music. It was the first time any of us had performed together in public for over six months and at times this felt overwhelming, not just for us but the audiences too. Music represented much more than music itself.

This 'Revolution' themed festival was driven by a burning passion, of course, but everyone involved played their part, in itself a true test of community, friendship, trust and generosity. This is precisely why I love running the festival because it's not just about music but also people, this coming together which is more vital now than ever before. We profoundly understood this at the time and it remains one of the most touching experiences. I've always striven to break down boundaries and share culture with no social barriers and here was a unique opportunity to take that philosophy one step further.

As we head into our 13th season, launching at Welburn Manor on August 7th, with a new studio nestled in the heart of the moors, it's safe to assume that the hills are indeed alive with the sound of music - and will hopefully inspire and influence many passing through as well as those who live here. Perhaps more artists will also stay and settle? Which reminds me, shouldn't North Yorkshire have a new concert hall? Now, should I set myself one more challenge ....?

JAMIE WALTON

COMMONDALE BRICKWORKS: RISE AND FALL OF A VILLAGE INDUSTRY

Commondale in its industrial heyday

The village today, from the same angle

photo © Phil Brown

COMMONDALE is a small, quiet settlement in the northern part of the North York Moors, with a station on the Esk Valley Line, which runs between Whitby and Middlesbrough. Walking down into the village on a bright spring morning nowadays, it is hard to imagine the intense industrial activity it supported in the second half of the 19th century.

All over the moors we find the remains of small industries. For example, coal was being mined locally as far back as medieval times. In 1786 Bransdale and Farndale had seven collieries working (now protected as scheduled monuments), while coal-mining in Danby Manor ended around 1880. Alum extraction began around Guisborough at the end of the 16th century and its export to other parts of Britain stimulated the expansion of Whitby's shipping industry in the 17th century, coming to an end in 1871. Also to the north of Commondale, nearer the sea, ironstone mining developed rapidly after the opening of the Eston Mine in 1850, and as the century went on the construction of the railways allowed for more mines further inland – notably at Rosedale - some of which were more successful than others. The one in Commondale, at Foul Green Farm, was not one of the successes.

Date plaque on Ness Terrace

photo © Caroline Riley

A much more successful enterprise in Commondale was the quarrying of clay for bricks, pipes and, for a short time, pottery. There is plenty of photographic and archaeological evidence of Commondale's brief industrial past, while a few local people still have vague memories of the last standing tall chimney, which was blown up in 1957.

BRICKS AND POTTERY

The industry started in the 1860s. At the start of the decade a Stokesley printer, John Pratt, who owned (or perhaps leased) land in Commondale, became aware of access to a large quantity of valuable fireclay; he proposed and set up the Cleveland Firebrick and Pottery Co Ltd. Initially it was expected that the company would be able to manufacture 3-4 million firebricks a year, and arrangements were made to export the entire produce of the works to London and other markets. The business was helped considerably by the opening of the Teesside to Whitby railway line in 1865 and the building of a siding from the works to the main line in 1867. Unfortunately, Mr Pratt (who also had some interest in the ironstone mine) died in 1867 and the company ceased production in the same year.

The works remained closed until 1872, when they were acquired by John Crossley, a name better recognised locally in connection with the brick (and sometimes pottery) works. Mr Crossley formed a new company, The Commondale Brick, Pipe and Pottery Co Ltd, and for the first eight years stuck to the manufacture of bricks, pipes and tiles. In 1879 the Linthorpe Art Pottery began the production of fine art pottery at Middlesbrough's Sun Brickworks and, perhaps inspired by their success, John Crossley's son, Alfred, started to produce pottery at Commondale in 1880. The clays being quarried on the edge of the village were found to be of excellent quality, well suited to the production of more refined '*objets d'art*'. The works started to manufacture a range of biscuit-ware in both buff and red terracotta: the buff ware was particularly admired, believed to be unique, with a slightly silky surface. ('Biscuit' in this context means any type of fired but unglazed pottery; the finer type is also known as 'bisque'.) The Commondale factory turned out vases, biscuit jars, water bottles, plaques, teapots, candlesticks and even busts of composers – now all highly collectible.

In 1882 Alfred Crossley left for the US. His father sold out to

Commercial Art Pottery and in 1883 the new company declared itself ready to recommence production. However, while pottery continued to be sold on site, it was old stock and production had not in fact restarted. Many of the experienced workers who had come from as far as Staffordshire and Wales left, possibly discouraged by the isolation and harsh winters as well as the lack of jobs.

At the end of the 1880s Thomas Ness of Darlington bought the works and started trading as Commondale Brick and Pipe Works, reverting to the production of bricks, tiles, pipes and decorative gardenware. In 1893 Alfred Crossley returned from America, re-joined the company, and took over management of the works. The family continued to manage the works from then on and eventually, in 1927, bought the whole village, including works, sidings, 15 cottages, Skelder Farm, Ness Terrace and land for £15,375 – just under £1 million in today's terms, which seems remarkably cheap!

The firm continued production of bricks, pipes, architectural terracotta and garden statuary but production fell and the factory closed in 1947.

COMMONDALE'S UNIQUE CHARACTER

This history is how the village of Commondale acquired its unique appearance and characteristics, with a large percentage of brick buildings (many with convenient date plaques) in an area known mainly for stone cottages, a village hall which until fairly recently was not allowed to serve alcohol because it was built by the Crossleys who were of strong Methodist faith, and a lot of chimney pots, Commondale bricks (known for their resistance to drilling), and garden urns in various states of repair.

In times when production was high it must have been a fairly grim place to live, but there were jobs available to support a relatively high population, a village school, church and chapel, a pub, a shop (or possibly two - for a while Coronation Cottages opposite the pub was a Co-op and the post office opposite might have been operating at the same time). In the 1960s the remains of the railway siding where it crossed the centre of the village towards the works could still be seen, and the sides of the bridge carrying the siding are still standing next to the main line of the Esk Valley Railway near the house called Diving Duck.

Gradually the village became more attractive to the modern eye, but it was no longer able to support a school or a shop. The population now stands at around 130 people, certainly fewer


House built of locally made bricks

photo © Phil Brown

than at the time of its industrial height. More trees have been planted, the site of the brickworks has been grassed over, the last chimney demolished and the land where the brickworks stood, at Raven Gill, became a permanent campsite for the Scout movement.

Examples of the pottery produced in the heyday of the industry can still be seen in the Whitby Museum in Pannett Park, Kirkleatham Museum, and the ceramics collection of York Art Gallery.

Buildings incorporating Commondale's bricks – in addition to those in the village - include the Ship Inn at Marske; the Albion Inn at Ryhope, Sunderland; the Church of St. John's, Seaton, Ashington; The Ord Arms at Newcastle; the Miners Welfare Hall at Fatfield, Co Durham; St. William's Church, Dormanstown, in Redcar & Cleveland; the Driffield Almshouses; Bridlington Town Hall; St. Aelred's Church, Tang Hall, York, and many other fine buildings.

An excellent book on the subject: "Commondale Clay. Bricks, Pipes and Pottery", by John and Joyce Cockerill, was published in 1995 and copies are still available online. There are few people around who remember working at the kilns, but their descendants still live locally and remember stories about the conditions there.

CELEBRATING THE PAST

In 2019 a group of local people held a Commondale Brick Day in the village hall and were surprised by the number of folk who turned up - and by the number who heard about it too late to come. They were hoping to repeat the experience last year but the pandemic intervened, and it is not clear whether this year will be an option either. However, they still have many photos of the works and the products made there - it is after all what the village is (a bit) famous for!

There is talk of reinstating some sort of small pottery venture in the village. It would mean getting permission from the Scouting movement to collect clay from the quarry on their land - and then experimenting!

CAROLINE RILEY


Commondale clay teapot

photo © Caroline Riley

Caroline Riley is an artist who lives and works in Commondale - and welcomes visitors. You can see examples of her work here - http://carolinerileyart.com/

THE UNDERGROUND MOORS

Bogg Hall Cave, Kirkbymoorside

Photo © Richard Wilson

THE NORTH YORK MOORS has never been an area traditionally associated with caving; in fact, many people believe that to go caving in the north of England, you need to head to the Yorkshire Dales. However, there are reasons why the Moors should also be on any good underground map.

Across the southern part of the National Park, from Scarborough to Sutton Bank, is a band of Jurassic limestone which extends down the spine of the country, ending at the famous Jurassic coast of Dorset. Much like the carboniferous limestone of the Yorkshire Dales, the Jurassic limestone can be dissolved by mildly acidic water, and so has the potential to form caves. As a fellow enthusiast for the North York Moors, you might wonder where are the caves - and where are the cavers, wielding their bags of rope and complex maps of subterranean labyrinths?

To answer this, we need to look more into the geology. The Jurassic limestone of the North York Moors is a fairly shallow band, typically 50m thick on average, but with two distinct layers known as the Malton Oolite and the Hambleton Oolite, separated by a layer of Middle Calcareous Grit. 'Oolite' is rock consisting mainly of small, round grains, so these limestones are very impure and gritty and therefore less able to support cave development than the purer limestone in the Yorkshire Dales. The other issue is the lack of channelling of the water. On Ingleborough of the Dales, for example, where there are dozens of miles of caves, the insoluble gritstone cap to the mountain serves to channel water into streams, which flow down with high energy onto the limestone plateau to penetrate natural fissures. Over millennia, this can form extensive cave systems, with the water re-emerging (known as 'resurging') 100-150m lower in altitude. The North York Moors lacks these gritstone capped mountains and depth.

There are several rivers in the Moors which do sink into the limestone as they meander onto it, including the Rye, Seven, Dove, Derwent, Riccal and Hodge Beck, but here the altitude of the sinking water is little more than 10-15m higher than their resurgences, giving little potential for the development of spacious or non-flooded cave systems.

EXPLORING THE HYENAS' DEN

We do know that caves once played a greater hydrological role in the southern end of the Moors, particularly after ice ages when substantial quantities of water surged down from melting glaciers further north and deep valleys such as Newtondale and Forge Valley were carved. Caves formed by this water can be found across the Moors but today they are dry, since their nearby valleys have been cut down, leaving the caves high and dry from their nearest stream. Fadmoor Cave and several around Kirkbymoorside are good examples. As water flow reduced in these caves, glacial mud and rocks started to settle out, filling many of the passages. Now, most of these caves can be explored for only 10-30m, the exception being Kirkdale Cave.

Kirkdale Cave is found 3m up the cliff wall of an abandoned quarry (grid ref. SE 678857). The 'old' part of the cave was discovered by quarrymen in 1821 and then explored by local archaeologists. The remains of at least 23 species of animal were found and it was concluded that the cave had been a hyena den. The finds played an important role in the science of palaeontology and our understanding of the earth's formation. Nowadays, about 150m of mucky crawls comprise this part of the cave, and anyone with a hard hat, a good torch (plus spare), gloves and heavy-duty old clothes can go and explore; but always tell someone where you are going! At the end of one of the passages, the floor slopes down into liquid mud, and in the 1990s, Scarborough Caving Club dug through to expose another 100-150m of passages.

Local folklore tells of a duck/goose/chicken (the choice of avian hero seems to vary) entering Kirkdale Cave and emerging from Manor Vale Cave in Kirkbymoorside. While this is of course not true, the two caves, a few miles apart, may once have been part of a shared hydrological system which is now totally filled with mud.

WINDYPITS

There is another class of cave that the North York Moors is particularly well known for: the Windypit. In other areas of the country these are called 'slip rifts' or 'mass movement rifts', but we are rather fond of the term 'Windypit'. Some of the most extensive of these caves emit plumes of warm air which can sometimes be seen rising as a mist, hence their name.

Windypits are not water-formed, and they are not exclusive to the limestone. They are formed near the top of a valley where a slippage of the land has opened underground fissures, in some

cases up to 40m deep and often more than 100m long. In many cases, these remain closed to the surface and many will remain undiscovered, but natural collapse can enable access.

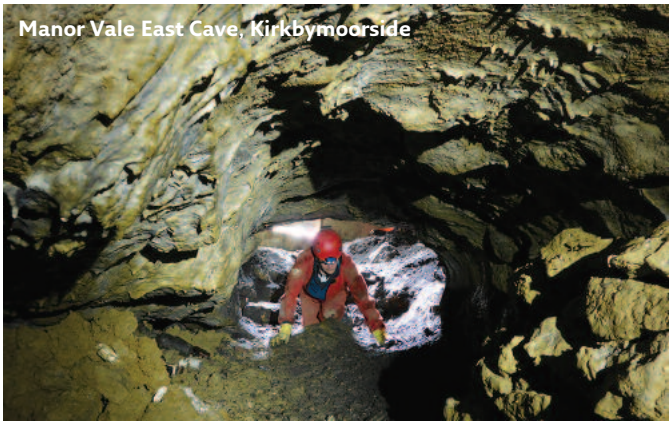
The most famous Windypits are those flanking the top of the Rye Valley in and around the Duncombe Park Estate. Here, Antofts, Bucklands, Ashberry and Slip Gill Windypits are the best known. To explore these requires specialist equipment to negotiate the vertical drops (pitches) and permission from the National Park, as the sites are archeologically sensitive following the discovery of Bronze Age bones and artifacts.

While many Windypits are relatively linear, some are complex networks of multiple fissures. In the 1990s and 2011, two deep and extensive new Windypits were found by teams from the North York Moors Caving Club and York Caving Club, including Old Fat and Past It Pot in Dalby Forest and MSG Hole near Old Byland, each 30-35m deep and 100m long. For properly equipped cavers, these offer a couple of hours of fine exploration.

ACTIVE CAVES

This brings us onto the question of active caves, in other words ones formed by and still carrying water. It used to be thought unlikely any such caves would exist in the Moors that were large enough to explore. The sinking water from the rivers was assumed to filter away through tiny, poorly developed passages.

Things changed in 1981 when two members of Scunthorpe Caving Club dived a resurgence in the River Dove called Bogg Hall Rising, near Keldholme. They passed through 20m of flooded passage to emerge in a large underground chamber, belly-deep in flowing water, and with the upstream passage heading off into the distance. The privilege of making such a discovery is immense; the divers headed upstream, being the first humans to see what lay around each corner, while never venturing more than a few hundred metres from their parked cars. What other sport can offer you such an honour while still making it back in time for last orders at the pub?



Manor Vale East Cave, Kirkbymoorside

Photo © John Dale

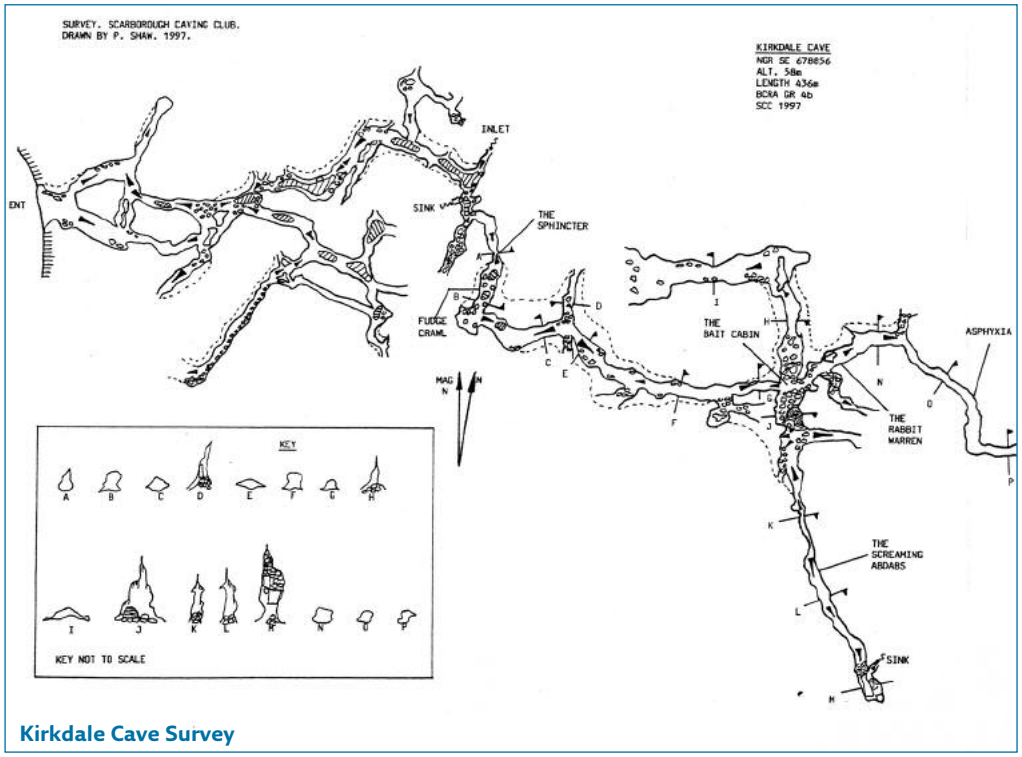
The divers explored 150m of cave, ending at a deep pool, and dived to a staggering depth of 18m, with all the water welling up from the bottom. This water comes from sinks in the River Dove 750m upstream of the resurgence, but at only just over 10m higher altitude. There had seemed little prospect of an explorable cave with such a limited vertical range. However, some of the water was coming from Hutton Beck in the next valley, 1.6km to the north and 40m higher in altitude, making for a much more appealing prospect.

Naturally, the story does not stop there. The discovery of Bogg Hall Rising turned out to be the start of one of the most exciting episodes in exploration, not just in the North York Moors, but in the entire UK. We'll return with the full story in a future issue of 'Voice of the Moors'!

MATT EWLES
YORK CAVING CLUB

If you're interested in caving, we recommend the website www.newtocaving.com for getting started. There are lots of clubs, many of which welcome new members with no experience, providing you have enthusiasm and a sense of adventure. There are also several instructed caving organisations who can offer experience days or guided trips at reasonable cost.

For more information on caves in the North York Moors (and some spoilers on the next part of our story!) visit www.yorkcavingclub.org.uk and www.nymcc.org.uk, and search for 'Caving in the North York Moors' on Youtube for a one-hour lecture.



Kirkdale Cave Survey

Photo © P. Shaw, Scarborough Caving Club

Excalibur Pot, Hutton Beck

Photo © Gary Douthwaite

IRENE PETCH: POET AND ECCENTRIC

BORN in 1898 as the Victorian era drew to a close, Irene Petch was the daughter of solicitor John Petch and his wife Elizabeth (née Hebden).

John was descended from a line of solicitors who had practised in Kirkbymoorside since the mid 1700s. The founder of this dynasty, John (it was a popular family name) Petch came to the town from Danby, set up in business, and built the house on Howe End which now bears his name. He was succeeded by his son Robert, who passed the house and the business to his son, also Robert, and who in turn was succeeded by his son, Irene's father. The family was prosperous, with lands and property in addition to their professional occupation, and they cemented their position in the town around 1900 by building a new and modern house, which they called Howe Green.

By the time Irene was born, there were other solicitors in the town; apparently the Petches were regarded as 'solicitors to the Anglican community'. They certainly maintained a close connection with All Saints' church in Kirkbymoorside; all the solicitors and their immediate family are buried in the churchyard, and a window is dedicated to the first Robert and his wife.

A young Irene in fancy dress

All photos from the archive of John Creighton

IRENE'S EARLY YEARS

John and Elizabeth married in 1894 when John was 38 and Elizabeth was 30. Irene, born four years later, was their only child. Women were first admitted as solicitors in 1922, when Irene was 24 years old, so, in the absence of a brother, might she have considered continuing the family tradition? There is no suggestion that she did; not only did she not need to earn a living, but such an idea may have been unthinkable in a Yorkshire backwater. Indeed, a female solicitor at Kitching Walker, the firm which succeeded the Petches, remarked in the early 2000s that even then some old Yorkshire farmers were not happy dealing with a woman and asked to see 'a proper solicitor'.

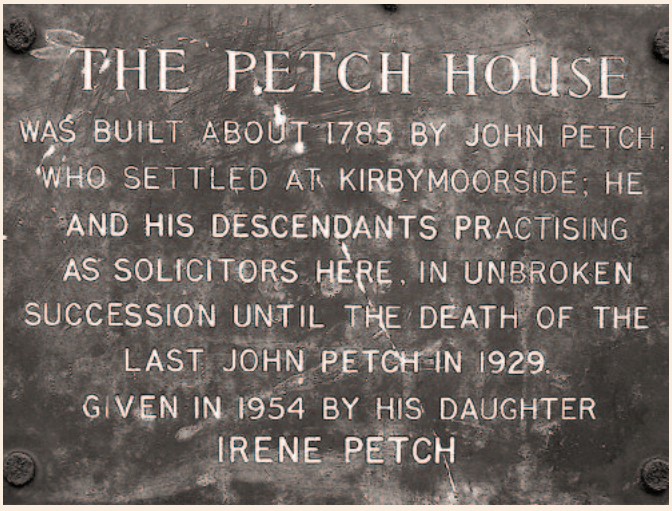
We have this account of Irene from a cousin who visited the family when she was young: "Poor Irene! I stayed with her father and mother when about nine years old and disgraced myself in a number of ways. The end came when, finding Irene's presence too distracting, I put her in an ottoman and stood a small chest-of-drawers on the top. Happily, she was rescued before she suffocated but I was packed off home as a very nasty little boy. Later on I visited Howe Green on several occasions. The last time was towards the end of the fifties when Irene was definitely very odd. When she died she left me a picture of 'Napoleon and the Angel' and a few bits of silver. I would sell 'Napoleon and the Angel' if I could because it is far too hideous to put up." Perhaps the picture was belated revenge for the ottoman incident!

A YORKSHIRE ECCENTRIC

Irene never married, whether from choice or because of the lack of eligible young men after the First World War. She lived alone at Howe Green after the death of her parents (John in 1926 and Elizabeth in 1946) except for a housekeeper, but found companionship with a cousin, the gloriously named Hyacinth Pike-Nott (known as Cynthia), who lived nearby. She seems to have become more and more odd as the years passed, so afraid

Petch House in the 1970s

Plaque on the wall of Petch House



of germs that she that she held a handkerchief to her mouth when talking to people, and as far as possible avoiding children. She also had a fear of being buried alive and made her doctor promise that he would cut her wrists before burial to ensure that she was actually dead.

A profound dislike of children was complemented by a fondness for animals. She kept cats, including one called Daisy who outlived her; she provided for Daisy's care after her death, leading to the headline in the local paper "Daisy the cat left £100 in spinster's will". Observing that dogs, free-roaming in those days, could not reach the horse trough on the corner of Swineherd Lane to drink, she had a low-level trough built into the wall of her house which is still there, though it no longer serves its original purpose.

Irene was a wealthy woman, owning a lot of land and property in Kirkbymoorside, and her charitable donations were many. In 1946 she donated a wood to the town, together with farmland which became part of the town playing fields. In the 1960s, four landowners including Irene were subject to the compulsory purchase of a piece of pasture called Oxcroft. There were early plans to call the housing development there 'Petch Close', although that was later abandoned in favour of retaining the name Oxcroft.

Irene also owned the old house in Howe End, from which the family had moved at the end of the 19th century. In 1954 she gave it to the Church of England Pensions Board, possibly as a move to reduce death duties. Several clergy widows were housed there, but shortly after Irene's death the Church sold the house to a family called Wilson, who rescued it by dividing it into two separate homes of a size more suited to the 20th century, one of which still bears the Petch name.

AN ACCOMPLISHED POET

Irene had her work published not just locally, but also nationally in numerous magazines. 'The Waiting Room', a collection of 39 poems, was published by Blackwells in 1931. "She handles words with the sensitiveness of a true craftsman," said The Times Literary Supplement. How proud she must have been of that! A subsequent book, 'The Call of the Land' (28 poems) was published by St Catherine's Press in 1954. Both are now out of print, but copies may occasionally be had second-hand. Her poem 'Grey Mother Church' (below) was written in 1935 for a new guide-book to All Saints.

Irene died from arteriosclerosis in 1965 in the house where she had lived all her life. A local resident recalled the splendid sight of her funeral cortège drawn by black horses, carrying her coffin to the churchyard at All Saints, where she is buried. Whether her wishes with regard to wrist-slitting were carried out is not recorded.

After numerous small personal bequests, her estate was divided between six charities, three religious organisations and three animal welfare societies. Her will included £100 to the Parochial Church Council of Kirkbymoorside "to be applied in keeping the graves and headstones of my grandparents, parents and myself in good order and repair". Notwithstanding this and her family's long connection with the church, Irene's grave is unmarked and the exact location is lost. The house at Howe Green was sold, and except for the old house and a memorial window in the church, the Petch name vanished from Kirkbymoorside.

JEAN RICHARDS
THE PETCH HOUSE, KIRKBYMOORSIDE

Photo © Phil Brown

GREY MOTHER CHURCH

Grey Mother Church - as Jesus long ago
Commanded the little children to be brought
That he might draw them to Him and bestow
His blessing on them, so you, who have caught
The spirit of His teaching, open wide
Your arms today, and take each helpless child
And bless it in His name.

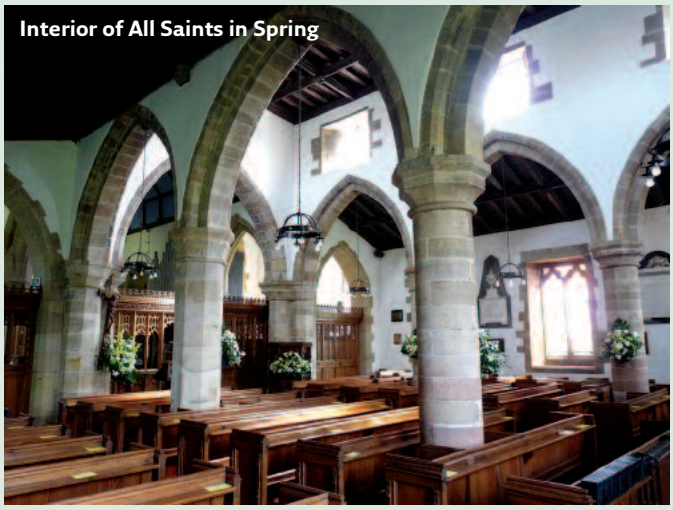
Vigilant guide,
Warning your children lest they be beguiled
By earthly things. You take them by the hand
And lead them confidently down the years,
Strengthening them so that they may withstand
The storms of life, and quietening their fears;
Rejoicing in their Spring and joining them
In holy wedlock; sharing all their deep
Sorrows and joys, alert and swift to stem
The rising tide of worldliness, and to keep
Those hurtful things away which smirch the soul.

Grey Mother Church - red roofs cluster round,
Huddle together, seeking your protection;
This green quiet garden, this most holy ground
Has held the loyalty and the affection
Of generations. Through the centuries
How many bridegrooms, and how many brides,
How many slow processions, have walked these
Smooth well-worn stones? Alas, how Time derides!
They all have vanished; and there now survives
No shadow of their wisdom or their skill,
No trace of their laborious honest lives,
And yet about this place there lingers still
The spirit of the past, a mellow peace.

And with that ancient quietude are blent
Small country sounds: a little rustling breeze,
A lamb's thin cry, the mother's answering bleat,
The haunting sweetness of the blackbird's song.
Here life and death foregather, here they meet
Among the lichened tombstones - death so strong,
So palpably victorious .... Yet that tree,
Which through the winter looked so bare and dead,
Now challenges death's seeming victory.
For each pale downy Chestnut bud has shed
Its varnished scales, has burst its prisoning sheath.
So, one day, shall these sleeping bodies fling
Away their bonds, shall break the seals of death,
And waken to an everlasting Spring.

IRENE PETCH
APRIL 1935

ALL SAINTS, KIRKBYMOORSIDE



Interior of All Saints in Spring

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH stands at the head of Kirkbymoorside on a site believed to have been in use since the 8th century. An earlier wooden timber structure was destroyed, probably during the Viking raids, and replaced by a more enduring stone church. The site's long history was confirmed when Ernest Collier, who was the sexton back in 1965, unearthed a silver sceat (coin) in the churchyard, dating back to around 800 AD. Our present-day building began life in the 13th century, with numerous additions and alterations over the ages, both inside and out.

The surrounding churchyard is used as a community site, popular with visitors and residents alike. A beautiful Grade II listed monument in the form of a chest dedicated to Harriett Scawin, who died in 1846, welcomes visitors on the approach to the church. The imposing stone porch dates to around 1450, with a charming parvise or priest's room above for visiting clergy, complete with fireplace and chimney, and until very recently a quirky domed floor. It can be accessed from inside by a steep, narrow staircase, the top of which offers a wonderful view over the interior of the church. The interior was given a Gothic makeover in 1874-75 by the renowned Sir George Gilbert Scott, with services held in the nearby Tollbooth until the refurbishment was finished.

If you look up into the roof space, you can see the carved bosses featuring over 13 different designs including the Green Man, the Yorkshire rose and the Neville family coat-of-arms. The walls are now white, but during building works in 1851 a painted medieval figure of a bishop was uncovered, similar to those in St. Peter and St. Paul's church, Pickering. Sadly, the image was re-covered rather than preserved; however, the walls in All Saints are said to have been quite impressive – on his visit to the area in 1651, George Fox, founder of the Religious Society of Friends, refused to enter the church as "it was so much painted".

The stained-glass windows are fascinating. One shows an early image of the original church, whilst another features a memorial to the Wrothwell family, who were local pharmacists. The design contains an image of their shop alongside bottles of coloured liquid and a pestle and mortar. It is one of only a handful of known memorials to chemists. The earliest piece of medieval glass to survive is hidden high up within the vestry and features a rather fierce-looking 'Face of God.'

Behind the altar the impressive East window was gifted to All Saints in 1908 by the Duncombe family. However, the charming reredos in the adjacent Lady Chapel is not original to the building: the panels date to the time of James I and were brought to Kirkbymoorside from St Nicholas' church in Knaptoft, which was destroyed by Cromwellian troops following the Battle of Naseby in 1645.

Set into the wall near the altar rail is a wonderful brass tablet commemorating the life of Lady Brooke, whose family were related to the Nevilles. When she died in 1600, the family created this memorial including an image of her kneeling in prayer, surrounded by her five daughters and six sons. The tablet exalts her virtues as "a good woman, a very good mother and an exceedingly good wife." Originally the tablet would have covered her grave set into the church floor, but the slab was removed during later building works. Another local legend has it that hidden somewhere on the church stone floor was a reversed memorial tablet, on the underside of which was carved an anvil. It is supposed to mark the resting place of the local blacksmith, who risked much to aid the escape of Charles Neville, 6th Earl of Westmoreland, one of the key figures during the failed Rising of the North in 1569.

Today, All Saints remains at the heart of the community and continues to adapt to the needs of the town. A recently installed kitchen, and the opening up of the interior as pews are replaced by chairs, means it offers a versatile space for concerts and events as well as continuing to serve its spiritual role.

LOUISE MUDD
KIRKBYMOORSIDE HISTORY GROUP

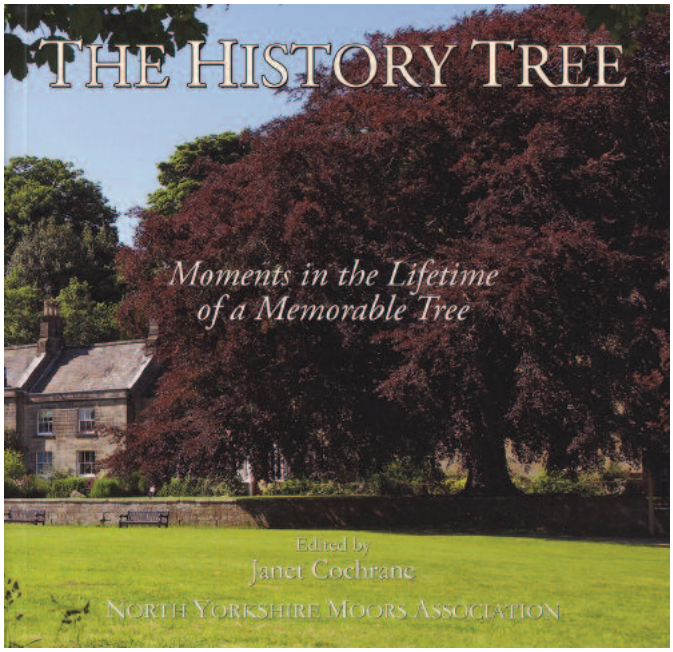
Kirkbymoorside's Annual Heritage Day is on Saturday 24 July 2021 - do call in to explore All Saints' Church like so many others have before!

The 'Face of God' medieval stained glass

THE HISTORY TREE CONNECTION

LAST November NYMA received an enquiry from Mr Peter Facer, of Santa Monica, USA. Peter had enjoyed reading *The History Tree* book online and was desirous of ordering a copy. He had noticed my name on two of the articles and asked for his warmest wishes to be forwarded to me "who helped give me an appreciation of conservation, natural history and fossils way back when". The name rang a distant bell so I emailed Peter to thank him and ask when and where we had met. Thus began an exchange of emails taking us back over fifty years!

"The History Tree: Moments in the lifetime of a memorable tree" is available from NYMA – see https://www.nyma.org.uk/books



In the mid-60s I worked as a Field Tutor for the Young Naturalists' Association (later Yorkshire Field Studies Trust) whose founder, Geoffrey Watson, had recently acquired the old vicarage at Hutton Buscel for use as a residential field study centre for children. He also rented Red House at Hackness and in 1967, having sold the centre at Hutton Buscel, purchased Newton House near Littlebeck. (See my article "A House for all Reasons" about Newton House in *Voice, Summer 2020.)* It transpired that as a young boy Peter had attended several courses at both Red House and Newton House, hence our connection. It was whilst working at Newton House that I met my future wife, Pat, whom Peter also remembered.

In 1974 I left Yorkshire Field Studies to work for the North York Moors National Park Authority as an Information Officer. Later, I became the Park's Heritage Coast Ranger based at The Moors Centre, Danby. My office looked out over the Esk Valley to distant Fryup Dale whilst to my immediate left stood a magnificent Copper Beech tree, immortalised by NYMA as *The History Tree,* which cast its shade from the early morning sun.

Yorkshire Field Studies eventually sold Newton House, I retired from the National Park in 2002, and the 'history tree' was felled in 2007. Peter now lives in California and in 2020 came across *The History Tree* online. The circle was complete!

ALAN STANIFORTH

HEDGING YOUR BETS? A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

ALL OF US at NYMA aim to protect and conserve the beauty of the North York Moors - but when should we deviate from that protection and conservation?

Back in June 2017, on the outskirts of Malton, I was on the receiving end of a tractor pulling out of a field due to the driver's alleged poor visibility, as a result of an uncut hedgerow on either side of the field entrance. I was in the front passenger seat and the tractor crashed into the side of the car, forcing it onto the opposite side of the road and smashing into my left arm.

There are other reports of accidents as a result of overgrown hedgerows and verges. One highlights how traffic signs can be obscured by overhanging foliage, which can result in late decision-making and changing lanes. Another refers to a local council that had failed to trim bushes on a verge which reduced the visibility of oncoming traffic for a pedestrian, resulting in life-threatening injuries. Government statistics of road traffic accidents from 2018 show that nationally, overgrown vegetation was a contributory factor in 134 slight accidents, 63 serious accidents and 3 fatalities.

Our roadside verges and hedgerows harbour countless species of flora and fauna and legislation is in place to protect them: principally the Hedgerow Regulations (1997). The responsibility for maintaining hedges lies with the landowner, Highways England, or the local authority. North Yorkshire County Council recommends that trimming should not take place between 1st April and 31st July, while government guidance extends the restriction, stating 1st March to 31st August. Their argument is to protect nesting birds and other wildlife and encourage flowers and seeds as foodstuff for wildlife.

After benefiting from the fantastic service of the Yorkshire Air Ambulance and the NHS, and after six operations and a lengthy period of rehabilitation, I still have limited movement and compromised strength in my arm, and considerable pain. I wonder if the Hedgerow Regulations need to be adhered to so rigidly - or maybe in my case the tractor driver should have taken more care? Should it be the responsibility of pedestrians and road users to proceed with caution near overgrown vegetation or should the legislation be revisited?

I hadn't paid much attention to the significance of cutting hedgerows until then, and I am very much in favour of protecting wildlife habitats. This experience, however, made me consider: at what cost are hedgerows and verges left uncut?

CAL MOORE

GUISBOROUGH TOWN HALL: THE FUTURE UNDER WRAPS

ANYONE who visits Guisborough currently cannot help but notice a huge white parcel opposite the market cross in Westgate, in the centre of the town. Under the wrappings a great transformation is taking place. One of the town's most important buildings is being renovated with great care and attention to detail: two hundred years after it was built, Guisborough's Town Hall is being brought back to life.

Built in 1821 using stones from the demolished Tockets Hall, home of the Chaloner family, and extended in 1870, this imposing building included an open-air market (the Shambles), a prison and a court-house. However the next century saw it gradually fall into disrepair, eventually becoming an embarrassment to the town. Then, a group of local people got together and began working to find a new purpose for it. It was bought by Redcar & Cleveland Council in 2015, and with funding from the Heritage Fund and support from local entities, the building is set to resume its important role in the culture and economy of the north-east of the National Park.

The work is being carefully monitored by heritage and conservation specialists and finds are being analysed by experts. It is expected that some of these exhibits will be displayed in the Heritage Centre planned for the ground floor of the building, which will once again be opened up onto Westgate, as the original Shambles were. The upper floors are being designed to provide good value, high-quality tourist accommodation, further enhancing Guisborough's standing as 'The Northern Gateway to the North York Moors'.

The wraps will come off in the autumn, when all will be revealed. The occasion will be celebrated with a Heritage Festival, including tours of the building. We look forward to this magnificent building serving the area for the next 200 years!

LORNA BUCKLE AND KEN HORNER
GUISBOROUGH TOWN HALL GATEWAY PROJECT

CITIZEN SCIENCE IN THE NORTH YORK MOORS

Look Wild app in action

UK NATIONAL PARKS are asking the public to 'Look Wild' this summer.

Look Wild is the first ever citizen science project to focus on the wildlife and biodiversity of the UK's 15 National Parks. From the seasoned naturalist to the first-time visitor, everyone can help by recording the different species of plants and animals they encounter.

In the North York Moors, the Look Wild project is designed to harness the public's love for the great outdoors and to help protect the park's precious ecosystems. Everyone who takes part will learn more about what they are seeing and contribute to real, on-going scientific research. Participants are asked to download the iNaturalist app, which helps to identify the plants and animals around them. Then, you simply take a photo of what you're seeing, upload it along with your location, and the app tells you what you're seeing – fungi, birds, plants or whatever – and adds to a huge database of the distribution of species of plant and animal.

For younger children, the 'Seek' app provides a fun way to photograph and identify any insect, flower or fungus they may come across on their adventures. The apps can be used anywhere, so people can enjoy learning about the natural world around them whether in remote or urban locations

Rachael Poole, Volunteer Officer for the NYMNPA, says: "Citizen Science projects such as Look Wild allow researchers to gather more information than would ever normally be possible, thanks to contributions from a vast army of volunteers. Taking part is both fun and informative, and the knowledge gathered will help us protect the North York Moors and its habitats for future generations."

Both the iNaturalist and Seek apps are available on Apple and Android devices and are free to download. For more information, please visit https://www.nationalparks.uk/look-wild/ - there's a video demonstrating the app and how to use it.

Honey-bee on heather

Photo © Tammy Andrews

Enjoying the Moors

Photo © Chris J Parker

SKYLARKS

Hello again younger readers. Imagine you are a wild creature. What sort of things do you think you would need to stay alive and healthy? They are likely to be the same things that you and I need, such as **food**, **warmth**, **shelter** and **safety**.

If you were a wild creature, like an insect, bird, amphibian, reptile or mammal, you might live in a place called a **hedgerow**. A **hedgerow** is row of bushes or trees forming a hedge which can be found along the edges of fields like in the photograph here taken in North Yorkshire.

SUMMER ACTIVITY

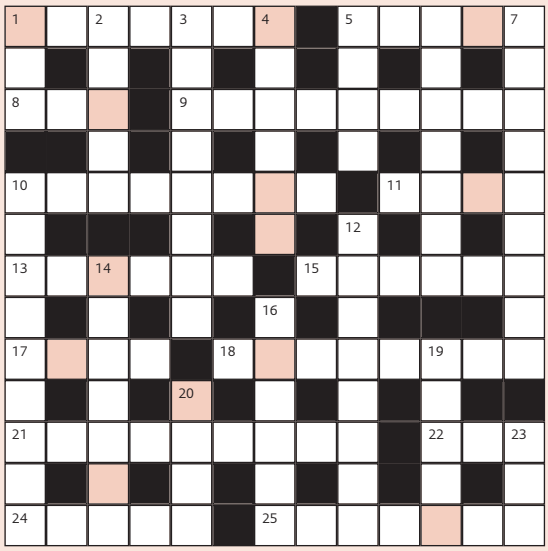
Visit a hedgerow like Pippa and James in our picture and see what you can find. Either use the space below to write and draw your findings or invent your own 'findings' sheet.

In the hedgerow, I found... (tick what you have found)

- ❏ An insect
- ❏ A mammal
- ❏ A bird
- ❏ An amphibian
- ❏ A reptile

Draw a picture of what you found

CROSSWORD 93 by AMANUENSIS



Take the letters from the coloured squares and rearrange in the boxes to solve the anagram:
Clue: Coastal gem although scarred (5, 5, 3)

ACROSS

1 Hear the upset on the moors (7)
5 Often goes into a bar (5)
8 Enclosure for the writer (3)
9 Figuring it out? (9)
10 Ring-fenced protection? (8)
11 Swedish toast, perhaps (4)
13 Presumed to start again from the middle (6)
15 Schedule begins with long period (6)
17 It can take quite a blow (4)
18 Varied busts are perplexing (8)
21 Has the ability to take things in (9)
22 You can get bags of this (3)
24 Pearls lose head noblemen (5)
25 To be this one must have the will (7)

DOWN

1 Trendy joint (3)
2 Invalidate a letter dropped from each year (5)
3 Striking worker accepts unspecified amount (8)
4 Can put things right (6)
5 Works on the range? (5)
6 Menu item supplied by 5 down? (7)
7 Tastes heavenly, perhaps? (5, 4).
10 House of prayer? (9)
12 It's a gate that cause upset (8)
14 Back two points inside animal track (7)
16 Missing sailor despatched (6)
19 Extremist (5)
20 Controls the pupil (4)
23 Expert has single spot (3)

Answers on back cover

NYMA NEWS

AS YOU'LL HAVE READ in our Chair's Foreword, another NYMA Conservation Award has been made: this time to support biodiversity work in the National Park. The recipient is the Esk Valley Camphill Community, whose members have planted trees, created a pond and otherwise diversified former farmland near Danby. The aim is to use the area to inspire other landowners to do likewise, and also to equip the team with better tools to enable them to carry out other projects.

A warm welcome to the Moors Inn, Appleton-le-Moors, our newest Business Member! We look forward to visiting the Inn as part of our 'Appleton Day' on Thursday August 19th (see 'Walks & Events' for details).

Arrangements are in place for the 2021 National Park Societies conference, to be hosted by NYMA at the Cober Hill Hotel, Cloughton, Scarborough, on October 12-14. The conference will explore the role of national parks in climate change mitigation and in helping to maintain mental and physical wellbeing in today's frenetic world, as well as providing a haven for flora and fauna.

Our fantastic line-up of speakers includes Tom Hind, CEO of the North York Moors National Park Authority; Kate Ashbrook of the Open Spaces Society; David Rooke, Chair of the Yorkshire Derwent Catchment Partnership; Debbie Trebilco, North Yorkshire Rural Commissioner, Trustee of the North York Moors National Park, and green energy farmer; David Steel, CEO of the Dawnay Estates; and award-winning wildlife photographer Steve Race. There will also be field trips which illustrate the discussion topics. For more information and booking, please go to https://www.nyma.org.uk/ and click on the Conference tab.

The Conference will be followed by the NYMA AGM on the afternoon of Thursday October 14th, again at the Cober Hill Hotel – more details on the 'Walks & Events' page of NYMA's website.

Photos © Janet Cochrane

Wildlife pond near Danby

CROSSWORD ANSWERS (see page 19)

ROBIN HOOD'S BAY

Anagram

Down

1 hip; 2 annul; 3 handsome; 4 remedy; 5 chef; 6 chicken; 7 Angel cake; 10 parsonage; 12 agitates; 14 sponsor; 16 absent; 19 ultra; 20 iris; 23 ace

Across

1 heather; 5 cocoa (chocolate bar); 8 pen; 9 numbering; 10 palisade; 11 skol (Swedish for cheers); 13 resume; 15 agenda; 17 oboe; 18 abstruse; 21 absorbent; 22 tea; 24 earls; 25 testate

The North Yorkshire Moors Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Registration no. 1169240

NYMA WALKS & EVENTS

Friday 30 July
BECK HOLE IRONSTONE and GOATHLAND WHINSTONE, 7 miles

Meet at the Pay & Display carpark in Goathland, YO22 5LX (toilets available) for 10am start.
Jane Ellis will lead a walk down the old incline into the Murk Esk Valley to trace railways associated with Beck Hole's ironstone industry, then up to Sil Howe whinstone quarries. We return via the whinstone mine entrance, finding evidence of wartime bomb damage, then along the mine tramway route by way of the reservoir which used to supply water for the turbine for the Goathland stone-crusher.
Please wear stout footwear and gaiters to deter ticks, or at least tuck your trousers into your socks, and bring a picnic lunch. There will be plenty of opportunity for tea and cake in Goathland after the walk!

Thursday 19 August
APPLETON DAY

Meet at Appleton-le-Moors Village Hall, YO62 6TE (toilets and picnic tables available) for 10.30 start.
Local resident Jim Hall will lead us on a guided walk around the pretty village of Appleton-le-Moors. After an hour or so exploring the village, you can accompany Jim on a 2.5 mile walk via Appleton Mill (includes a steep climb), or head back to the Village Hall / explore the village further with a self-guided leaflet. The Moors Inn opens at 11am - perfect timing for coffee! - and we'll book lunch for those who wish. There will be a small charge of £2.50 for this walk. **Please book** on secretary@nyma.org.uk / 07570 112010.

Saturday 18 September
CAWTHORNE ROMAN CAMPS, 1 + 5 miles

Meet at Cawthorne Camp carpark, 3.5 miles northwest of Pickering (SE 782896, nearest postcode YO18 8QQ) for 10.30 start. After viewing this important Roman site (1-mile gentle walk), we head off on a 5-mile walk through woods and farmland. Led by Janet Cochrane and Robin Chapman (secretary@nyma.org.uk / 07570 112010).

Thursday 14 October
NYMA AGM

Our AGM will take place at Cober Hill Hotel, Cloughton, Scarborough, starting at 3pm, following the National Park Societies conference (12-14 Oct). You can attend the full conference (special NYMA members rates apply), join us for the conference field-trips on the morning of the 14th and lunch before the AGM (small charge for the field-trips / lunch), or just come to the AGM. Please see https://www.nyma.org.uk/2021-conference/ .

APOLOGY

Sincere apologies are due to Steve Street, who took the beautiful winter photo of Freebrough Hill used on a Royal Mail postage stamp a few months ago. We gave the wrong attribution for this in the last issue of Voice. We think your photo is stunning, Steve!

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

www.nyma.org.uk

www.facebook.com/wildaboutthemoors/